



Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
Day of General Discussion
“Women in conflict and post-conflict situations”
18 July 2011, New York



Summary report

On the occasion of its 49th session, held in New York from 11 July to 29 July 2011, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) held a general discussion on women in conflict and post-conflict situations in the context of the following provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women:

Articles 2 (a – g) on the core obligations of States parties to the Convention; Article 4 on temporary special measures; Article 5(a) on the modification of social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women; Article 6 on the suppression of trafficking and exploitation of women; Article 7 & 8 on women’s participation in political and public life and their representation in government and at the international level; Article 9 on women’s rights to a nationality; Article 10 on the right to education; Article 11 on the right to work; Article 12 on the right to health; and Article 15 (1) on women’s equality with men before the law.

The purpose of the general discussion was to commence the Committee’s process of elaborating a "*General Recommendation on Women in Conflict and Post-conflict Situations*". The Committee decided at its 47th session, pursuant to Article 21 of the Convention, to develop a general recommendation on the protection and advancement of women’s human rights in conflict and post-conflict situations. The purpose of the general recommendation is to provide appropriate and authoritative guidance to States Parties on the measures to be adopted to ensure full compliance with their obligations to protect, respect and fulfil women’s human rights during times of armed conflict and in all peace-building processes, which includes the immediate aftermath of conflict and long-term post-conflict reconstruction.

In anticipation of the general discussion, the Committee prepared a concept note in order to assist interested parties in formulating written and oral submissions for consideration in their process of elaborating the general recommendation. The Committee invited United Nations specialized entities and bodies, United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms, non-governmental organizations and other interested individuals to participate in the general discussion and to provide written submissions. The general discussion took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, Conference Room 3, located on the first floor of the North Lawn Building, on 18 July 2011, from 10:00am to 1:00pm. More than 200 people attended the discussion, including representatives from UN agencies, representatives from State Parties and non-governmental organizations. The Committee also received over 30 written submissions and other inputs from a broad spectrum of interested parties on the topics discussed during the consultation. The written submissions are available on the Committee’s webpage.¹

In addition to the public notice, the Committee extended invitations to UN independent experts, Special Procedures thematic mandate holders and various other relevant experts to participate in the general discussion and contribute to the process. In response thereto, the Committee received numerous submissions, which are also available on the Committee’s webpage. The following experts made presentations on the day of general discussion:

- Ms. Margot Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
- Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

¹ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/discussion2011.htm>

- Ms. Rashida Manjoo, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences
- Mr. Juan Mendez, Special Rapporteur on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- Ms Jessica Neuwirth, Coordinator of the High-Level Panel on Remedies and Reparations for Victims of Sexual Violence in the DRC convened by the High Commissioner for Human Rights

A. Opening Remarks

Ms. Sylvia Pimentel, Chairperson of the CEDAW Committee, opened the consultation by explaining that the aim of the general discussion was to elaborate the content and determine the direction of the general recommendation. Ms. Pimentel acknowledged the overwhelming interest of the participants in the process and thanked all interested parties for their written contributions. Noting that the drafting of the general recommendation would commence in 2012, Ms Pimentel informed participants that the Committee will most likely hold further consultations at the regional level. Further information will be provided once a decision has been made in this regard.

Mr. Ivan Simonovic, Assistant Secretary-General to the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights noted the collaborative efforts of UN Women and OHCHR in providing support to the Committee in this process. Mr. Simonovic mentioned that violence against women has garnered greater attention over the years and has become entrenched in the general discussion of violence, particularly with regards to violence against women in post-conflict settings. He emphasized that since violence against women during conflict is a continuation of discrimination against women in other settings, it is critical that the general recommendation address the root causes of conflict.

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General for Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships to UN Women, committed UN Women's further support in working with the Committee and the Convention to prioritize the protection of women in conflict and post-conflict situations and towards the finalization of the proposed general recommendation. Ms. Puri expressly noted the timely and necessary nature of the general recommendation, not only for countries on the agenda of the Security Council but for all States parties to the Convention primarily because it will facilitate the framing of international responses to conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as support the enforcement of temporary special measures, a necessary step in the protection and advancement of women's human rights.

Ms. Puri suggested that the general recommendation engage the full range of human rights protections afforded to women, including all civil, political, economic and social rights. She highlighted four key areas for consideration in the development of the language of the general recommendation, including the reassertion of the rule of law after conflict; the enforcement of transitional justice measures to ensure national commitment to women's rights; the advancement of transformative post-conflict justice and reparations for victims and survivors of sexual violence; and the transformation of post-conflict governments to include greater women's political participation. Ms. Puri concluded that the general recommendation is crucial for State parties as it will provide essential normative guidance to assist in the effective national implementation of the Convention.

Ms. Pramila Patten, member of CEDAW and Chair of the Working Group on women in conflict and post-conflict situations, introduced the general recommendation, noted the purpose of the discussion and the hopes for a wider role of the general recommendation regarding CEDAW and the international community. In respect of the concept note, Ms. Patten underlined that it does not provide an exhaustive list of issues and concerns relative to women in conflict and post-conflict situations and should be understood as merely providing preliminary ideas to facilitate discussion during the global consultation.

Ms. Patten stated that the general recommendation is necessary because women suffer disproportionately in conflict and post-conflict situations and armed conflicts exacerbate violence against women. The primary purpose of this recommendation, she stated, is to provide authoritative guidance to State parties on the

legislative, policy and other appropriate measures to ensure full compliance with their Convention obligations to protect, respect and fulfill women's human rights in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

Ms Patten noted that one of the broad aims of the guidance is to contribute to the efforts to eliminate the culture of impunity for women's human rights violations and to provide redress to victims. The general recommendation, she stated, will draw upon existing efforts to address women's concerns and priorities in conflict and post-conflict situations. These efforts include the numerous resolutions adopted by the Security Council in the context of women, peace and security, in particular Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). She mentioned that despite these progressive efforts, there has been limited implementation and it is therefore the Committee's responsibility, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, to address the significant gaps and challenges in relation to gender-based violence that characterizes conflict and post-conflict situations.

Ms. Patten noted that the preamble of the Convention and its 16 articles provide the necessary legal framework which establishes the full protection of women in conflict and the advancement of their rights in post-conflict situations. In particular, she noted the importance of article 3 on access and enjoyment of all social, economic civil and political rights on a basis of equality with men; article 2 (e) on the elimination of discrimination by non-state actors; article 6 on the obligation of State parties to suppress all forms of trafficking and exploitation of prostitution of women; articles 7 and 8 on the advancement of women's equal and meaningful participation in all processes related to conflict prevention, resolution and the maintenance and promotion of peace; and, article 4 (1) on the provision of temporary special measures. She finally mentioned that the General Recommendation will also make reference to the Committee's General Recommendation 28 on the obligation of States Parties under the Convention. Ms Patten concluded by noting the proposed scope of application of the general recommendation, stating that it should extend to all forms of armed conflict and situations of violence and instability and that it should appropriately respond to the experiences of women in all their diversity, specifically multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination already recognised in the Committee's previous general recommendations.

B. Summary of Statements from Keynote Speakers

Ms. Margot Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, commenced her intervention with a plea to discard the idea that rape and sexual violence during conflict is inevitable. She noted that there is currently lack of knowledge on the nature of sexual violence in times of conflict, especially where rape is used as weapon of war and that effective prevention and protection from sexual violence requires a greater level of awareness. Ms Wallström expressed grave concern about the lack of understanding and appreciation of the full and long-term consequences of sexual violence, in particular the shame and stigma experienced by the victim. In conclusion Ms. Wallström made the following suggestions for the Committee to consider in the drafting process:

- The need for Member States to draft, adopt and implement gender equality legislation and policy that respects, protects and advances women's human rights;
- Encouraging Member States to elaborate codes of conduct and disciplinary rules for all parties to the armed conflict;
- Proposing concrete measures in order to ensure women's meaningful participation and representation in political processes;
- Encouraging troop-contributing countries in particular to end impunity by following-up allegations of sexual violence and abuse in peace-keeping operations and to put measures in place that will ensure accountability for these types of offences in national courts;
- The Security Council to remain seized with the matter of conflict-related sexual violence and to seriously utilize its powers of naming and shaming in accordance with the terms of Security Council Resolution 1960.

Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, noted that women and girls are affected by armed conflict in at least 5 different ways. Firstly, women and girls are victimized in physical attacks, which often result in maiming or killing. Secondly,

women and girls are often taken as combatants, sex slaves, drug mules and/or domestic workers at times of armed conflict. There are also instances of misinformed voluntary recruitment by women joining state or non-state actors as combatants. Thirdly, internally displaced/refugee women and children are the least likely to receive adequate food, shelter, health services or education. Fourthly, women and children become the heads of household in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. Lastly, women and girls are the most common victims of trafficking, especially in Eastern Europe and in the Horn of Africa. Ms. Coomaraswamy proposed the following for consideration in the drafting of the general recommendation:

- Recognition of the importance of ending impunity for the various forms of violence and ensuring access to justice, including the delivery of reparations for those affected by providing a framework for prosecutions, transitional justice and reconciliation efforts.
- Propose measures for the protection of women and girl-child combatants and pay particular attention to gender-sensitive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes.
- Propose specific measures for internally displaced and refugee women, with a specific focus on access to education, health care and documentation.
- The Committee should consider reviewing the situation of girl combatants by referring to the Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) and Security Council Resolution 1960 (2010), as well as the UNICEF child protection network.
- Women's political participation should also be addressed to ensure their meaningful participate in peace processes as well as in all post-conflict governance processes.

Ms. Rashida Manjoo, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, noted that violence against women derives from inequalities in political representation and a lack of social, cultural and economic rights that contribute to particularly high rates of poverty among women and children. She also noted that there are post-conflict reintegration difficulties after acts of violence against women. Gender-based violence is a major form of inequality, as affected regions experience violence before and during times of conflict, therefore, conflict in itself exacerbates violence against women. Ms. Manjoo made reference to her 2010 report on reparations, emphasizing the transformative potential of reparations, noting that they have the potential to subvert pre-existing patterns of cross-cutting structural subordination, gender hierarchies, systemic marginalization and structural inequalities that may be at the root cause of the violence. She further highlighted the discrimination faced by women in rehabilitation and reconstruction processes and the fact that very frequently their needs are not adequately factored into international donor and reconstruction programmes or the distribution of humanitarian aid.

In conclusion Ms. Manjoo outlined a set of issues and concerns relating to violence against women in the context of armed conflict and which the Committee may wish to consider in the elaboration of the general recommendation:

- Elaborate on positive obligations as they relate specifically to violence against women in the four spheres (individual, community, State and transnational levels), paying particular attention to the due diligence obligation to provide reparations to victims of violence;
- Specific recommendations that support efforts to enhance women's political participation in accordance with the provisions of Article 7 of the Convention;
- Carefully consider the 1993 Declaration on Ending Violence against Women, focusing specifically on the prevention component of the due diligence standard contained therein;
- Examine how States parties obligations under international law in respect of social, economic and cultural rights can translate into concrete measures for protection;
- Elaborate specific recommendations that respond to the challenges faced by weak and fragile States to protect women's rights during and after conflict and to implement due diligence obligations.

Mr. Juan Mendez, Special Rapporteur on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, recommended that the general recommendation contribute to a redefinition of torture and sexual violence with reference to rape. Since torture is a mechanism of control in conflict and post-conflict situations, gender-based violence seeks to humiliate the victim and destroy the society and family. When women survive such atrocities, there is a differentiated impact of isolation and stigma.

Mr. Mendez further suggested that the general recommendation should seek to redefine rape and other forms of sexual violence. Such a redefinition should argue for the following: rape as genocide, equal accountability for state and non-state actors, the prosecution of every rape case, an enhanced protection for women in conflict and post-conflict situations (which requires addressing the culture of impunity and operating on a gender sensitive approach), addressing torture and ill treatment and make more effective reparation strategies.

Mr. Mendez paid special attention to actor responsibility, especially for rape as genocide. While recognising that States bear the primary responsibility in international law, he urged for the careful examination and consideration of the roles and responsibilities of non-State actors, including *de facto* regimes or authorities; armed opposition groups; private security companies and mercenaries, Mr. Mendez noted that a critical component of the prevention of torture is fulfillment by the State of its due diligence obligations to investigate, prosecute, punish and provide reparations for all acts of torture. In conclusion Mr. Mendez suggested as follows for consideration by the Committee:

- Due to the *de facto* and *de jure* impunity which surrounds violations of women's human rights, it is critical to ensure that where there is absolute prohibition of torture, the mechanisms for the investigation, prosecution, punishment and provision of reparations have a gender-sensitive approach;
- Propose measures to hold state *and* non-state actors accountable if there is a failure to provide private persons with redress. States must take all legal and other measures that are necessary to provide effective protection of women against gender-based violence.
- The general recommendation must stress government accountability for the failure to act with due diligence in response to violations by private actors. In this regard the Committee should strive to ensure that State parties take appropriate measures to prevent, punish, investigate or redress the harm caused by state and non-state actors against women.

Ms. Jessica Neuwirth, Coordinator of the High-Level Panel on Remedies and Reparations for Victims of Sexual Violence in the DRC, convened by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, provided input on the 3 March 2011 report. The High Level Panel had conducted interactive dialogues with survivors of sexual violence and various other stakeholders, including government officials, officials in the justice sector, members of civil society and UN representatives. The consultations focused on the adequacy of remedies and reparations available to victims of sexual violence. Ms. Neuwirth noted the impact of rape on survivors, in particular, the physical, psychological and material harm compounded by the stigma and discrimination they face in their families and communities, She also brought attention to the fact that the stigma is further compounded by conditions such as fistula, pregnancy resulting from the rape and the contraction of sexually transmitted diseases such HIV/AIDS. She underlined that access to health care and education for themselves and their children were amongst the highest priorities conveyed repeatedly by the victims to the panel. Ms. Neuwirth recommended the following substantive areas for consideration in the Committee's drafting process:

- Consider the provisions of the Basic Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparations which require States to establish national programmes for reparation and other assistance to victims in the event that the parties liable for the harm suffered are unable or unwilling to meet their obligations.
- Further consider avoiding linking reparations measures to the identification of perpetrators but make the remedy available to victims of sexual violence whose perpetrators are unidentified or insolvent as a component of the fight to end impunity;
- In addition to monetary compensation, it may also be useful to consider other forms of reparations that restore the dignity of survivors, such as the public recognition of harm and public expression of support to victims, particularly from the highest level of government;
- In relation to stigma and discrimination faced by survivors, the Committee may wish consider specifically elaborating guidance in respect of Articles 5 and 2(f) of the Convention; and

- Proposing measures to increase women's participation in peacekeeping and mediation efforts and in all national and international initiatives directed at restoring and maintaining international peace and security.

C. Summary of Oral Statements

UN Women highlighted numerous challenges in the context of women, peace and security which the general recommendation could potentially respond to, including:

- Lack of implementation Security Council resolutions in the context of women's protection, promotion of their rights and guarantees for their full participation in post-conflict processes. The indicators for lack of implementation include the low number of women participating in formal peace processes; DDR processes still rarely address the needs of female combatants and post-conflict planning and financing for women's recovery remains weak;
- Failure to acknowledge that ending the war does not end violence against women which results in the benefits of peace not being enjoyed by all members of society;
- Recognising that an impunity gap exists in respect of sexual violence and international prosecutions since the majority of perpetrators return to communities or retain positions of power in the post-conflict State, thereby continuing to threaten women's lives and obstructing their full participation in public life;
- Reparations are the form of justice most prioritized by women, yet remain the most under-enforced and under-funded transitional justice measure.

A number of focus areas for post-conflict reconstruction were also highlighted, including the reassertion of the rule of law in peace building and recovery, reparations as a crucial transitional justice measure, transformative justice, gender sensitive focused (economic and political) recovery programmes, equal political representation and the use of temporary special measures. In conclusion, UN Women noted that the monitoring and reporting procedures for CEDAW could be strengthened by taking into account the set of indicators currently being developed to track implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325.

UNHCR underlined that most cases of conflict are rooted in the movement of internally displaced peoples (IDP), where there is an added burden for women and children. The proposed general recommendation must reinforce protection of migrant, refugee and IDP women. There must be coordination between UNHCR and OHCHR to foster parallel development; in other words, the Committee should coordinate with UNCHR on the protection of conflict-induced IDPs to prevent overlap and securely address issues of IDP women in conflict/post-conflict situations.

The proposed general recommendation should consolidate and advance the steps already taken by the Committee and the UNCHR to apply the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex to the displacement and statelessness contexts. The Committee and the UNCHR should have two separate recommendations, where the former should focus on human rights related to displacement, while the latter focuses on nationality and statelessness.

International Alliance of Women et al. The Committee is urged to prioritize prevention of violence against women, with specific reference to the complex diversity of conflict and post-conflict situations. The Committee should consider the following recommendations as referenced from the Convention: article 2, 7 and 8 on setting a standard for a culture of peace with gender equality and women's empowerment; article 6, 7 and 8 on the prevention of conflict situations, through the regulation of arms and light weapons, the investigation of the impact of women in conflict and armed conflict situations and the enforcement of the 'do no harm' policy; article 4, 10 and 11 on the investment in education matters; article 5 on gender sensitivity training to eliminate stereotypes in information, communications, media and stereotypes; and coordination with SCR 1325 on monitoring and evaluating women, peace and security in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Global Alliance against Traffic in Women The General Recommendation should recognize States' failure to uphold the rights of women fleeing conflict and post-conflict situations. Female migrants leaving conflict and post-conflict contexts and entering countries with restrictive and discriminatory immigration regulations face a heightened risk of being trafficked for multiple reasons, including the States' failure to protect leads to trafficking and detention increases vulnerability to trafficking.

The General Recommendation should emphasize that countries of destination should comply with their obligations under the following provisions of the Convention: article 2 on the protection of women from stigma and discrimination against women that impedes access to information, assistance and remedies for harms against women; article 6 on the protection of women migrants from physical and sexual violence as a result of inadequate anti-trafficking prevention and protection frameworks; and article 12 on the protection of women from severe health consequences that arise from all immigration detention centers.

Regarding sending countries, the Committee should recommend the adoption of comprehensive gender sensitive migration protection policies, gender sensitive training for border and immigration officials, adequate identification and processing measures in place for cases of trafficking, bilateral and multilateral migrant protection agreements between sending and receiving countries and the encouraged contact and collaboration between women migrants fleeing from conflict.

Widows for Peace through Democracy During conflict and post-conflict periods, women face a "social death", characterized by discrimination, stigma, abuse, sexual exploitation and extreme poverty. The Committee should recommend that State parties address the needs of widows in particular to ensure rights to inheritance, land and property ownership, as well as protection from violence, access to justice and participation in peace building processes.

Global Action to Prevent War The absence of women is apparent in peace and security discussions, where women are often undervalued. Due to the culture of impunity and militarization, state and non-state actors can aggravate economic and social rights for women in conflict and post-conflict situations. This has an effect on, for example, women's access to housing, education, quality health services and employment. The Committee is recommended to strengthen SCR 1325 in order to secure development and implementation plans and SCR 1820 on the classification of sexual violence in times of conflict and post-conflict as a war crime.

International Disability Alliance Requested the Committee to make recommendations on measures to ensure that all medical services, information and assistance are offered without discrimination; to ensure greater accessibility of information in read texts, Braille, large print, sign languages, closed captions, accessible websites and phone lines; to protect women and girls with disabilities from gender based violence; and to ensure women with disabilities participation in post-conflict peace-building through data collection, reconstruction, justice, development and reconciliation.

Women and Media Collective In a heavily militarised post-war situation women are open to different types of vulnerabilities that exist as a result of the militarization of re-construction, rehabilitation and development processes. As such, the Committee is asked to recommend that State parties implement gender sensitive demilitarization, demobilization and reintegration plan (DDR); temporary special measures to prevent the exploitation that arise out of post-conflict trafficking and exploitative relationships; and reconciliation initiatives that are participatory and inclusive to address the concerns of marginalized and non-majority communities, including political rights/issues.

Flower Aceh In Aceh, a Northern Sumatra Island and a part of the Republic of Indonesia, women faced sexual violence as a tactic of war, perpetrated by state and non-state (GAM rebel forces) actors. Women were also combatants and social members of this group. The Committee should recommend that State parties ensure women's participation in post-conflict peace-building processes to guarantee that women's human rights are not marginalized in the communal and political agenda. Also ex-combatants should have equal access to rehabilitation, compensation, rewards and participation in public and private spheres. Finally, State parties should fulfill the obligation to rehabilitation and compensate women victims of violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Association Najdeh Palestinian refugee women in Lebanon are a population of the Palestinian victims of the ongoing conflict. These women's experiences face great discrimination in the public and private sphere, limitations in decision making participation, restrictions from state and non-state actors, and conflict related violence perpetrated by state and non-state actors. The Committee is recommended to address the delays of implementation for SCR 194 (iii) on the right of refugees to return to their ancestral homes, SCR 242 (i) on the withdrawal of Israel from territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip) occupied in recent conflict.

B.a. B.e "Be active. Be emancipated" In the Yugoslav wars, rape camps and rape as a combat strategy were confirmed acts of sexual violence against women. Post-conflict, women were ignored for their struggles and received no recognition or reparations as survivors of such violence. It is recommended that the Committee stresses the obligations of the State parties under Article 1, 2, 3, 11, 12, 13 and 15 to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure reparations, including adequate pensions, assistance with access to work and the highest achievable standard of health care. Additionally, under Article 5, 7 and 8, State parties must ensure the full participation of sexual violence survivors as equal citizens without facing stigma.

Development alternatives with women for a new era, DAWN A major area of concern is the political restructuring and social transformations of protracted conflicts and post-conflict transitions in the South. The Committee must address the diversity of actors responsible for rights violations in conflict and post-conflict settings. This includes state and non-state actors within the State and extraterritorially. State parties should also be held accountable for inaction and lack of due diligence when acts are committed by private, non-state actors.

Forum for Women, Law and Development The armed conflict in Nepal had many female victims of war, particularly with reference to sexual violence. The case was particularly dire for women in the Maoist insurgency, acting as either combatants or social members. In the post-conflict era, these women are socially stigmatized, denied employment and increasingly exploited, hence vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. The Committee should further recall the State party obligations to implement SCR 1325 and 1820. Furthermore, conflict survivors should be protected through the enactment of transitional justice measures to prevent amnesty for perpetrators of sexual violence. Overall, justice mechanisms need to be stronger in investigation, prosecution and adjudication. Also, relief and reparation programs should be gender sensitive.

IWRAW Asia Pacific Modern conflict settings require a new focus due to the range of rights violations and state accountability. The Committee is recommended, firstly, to develop the legal framework for State parties to the Convention that includes the impact of conflict on women and marginalized groups, as outlined in Article 16 on women's right to movement and freedom of decision in marriage and choice of spouse. Secondly, there should be better monitoring and reviewing progress that looks at impacts of conflict/post-conflict situations, including national plans, trade agreements, and international investments and financial policies. Thirdly, State parties should be obligated to recognize women's roles as combatants and non-combatants in conflict. Fourthly, State parties should provide legal clarity on legal basis for accountability for non-state actors, i.e. international organizations, UN agencies, humanitarian and development aid organizations, international financial institutions and infrastructures. Finally, State parties must ensure that justice and reparation systems are in conformity with the Convention.

Open Line Access to justice and the implementation of reparations and redistributive justice strategies are difficult to enforce in a culture of impunity. Such an environment allows for an increased incidence of rape and other forms of sexual violence. Women refugees fear return migration ...

IDP Women's Association 'Consent' in Georgia Through the consideration of conflict in Georgia and other countries facing similar situations, the Committee should consider the following recommendations. Firstly, include women in all phases of conflict prevention, conflict, and post-conflict rehabilitation, in order to ensure continuance protection of women's rights. Secondly, monitor financial international funds remitted during and after conflict for women's groups/organizations. Thirdly, implement State parties' obligation to criminalize rape and sexual violence during conflict and post-conflict times, when such acts are exacerbated. Fourthly, mainstream the SCR 1325 Action Plan in Georgia and in other State parties. Fifthly,

include IDP women and their children into the preparation and decision making discussions. Lastly, coordinate regional and international women's solidarity groups to provide increased protection and participation of women in conflict and post-conflict peace-building.

Amnesty International During conflict and post-conflict situations, states are most likely to be unable to fulfill responsibilities to protect human rights for women. Additionally, women are not often extended the fundamental right to participate in rebuilding efforts. Therefore, it is specified that the State party must request such assistance from the Committee. Afterwards, the Committee must then provide guidance on the State parties' obligation to ensure any assistance or cooperation with Convention and other human rights treaties, particularly with regards to SCR 1325 and 1820. Furthermore, women must be given the fundamental right to participate in rebuilding efforts. It is hoped that such guidance will build on the works achieved by other treaty bodies on State party obligations, as these other treaty bodies have recognized the responsibilities of State parties to adhere to their obligations extraterritorially in their concluding observations.

US Federation for Middle East Peace In order to ensure women's empowerment and the protection of their role in all decision-making domestically and globally, the Committee is recommended to consider the following. Firstly, increase participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making in peace negotiation and political processes, as enforced in SCR 1325. Secondly, highlight special protections against gender-based violence and discrimination. Thirdly, in post-conflict situation, organize reconciliation workshops, briefings and discussions to empower and prepare women for equal participation and representation. Fourthly, State parties accept and/or increase gender sensitivity training as offered by UN Women, UNICEF and UNHCR. Finally, it is recommended that UN Women provide training and guidelines to States parties on the protection, rights and needs of women in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Minority Rights Group International Situations of conflict affect minority women particular as they are targeted based on their minority status and gender identity during conflict. After conflict, women also stigmatized and scrutinized because of their participation as members or combatants in minority political groups. The Committee should consider including humanitarian agencies in the addressing of the specific needs of minority women in conflict zones. During conflict, state actors controlling displaced/refugee camps should ensure protection of women, and also men and women who are minorities not parties to the conflict. Attention should also be paid to minority women coerced into becoming combatants for rebel forces.

D. Wrap up and Closing Remarks

Ms. Pramila Patten thanked the participants and briefly mentioned some of the inputs provided to the Committee during the discussion, such as, States responsibility in protecting women from violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, responsibility for abuses committed by non-state actors and peacekeepers and the need to address women ex-combatants. She also mentioned that there should be a comprehensive and inclusive coordination of UN agencies and treaty bodies to protect women and marginalized groups.

Ms. Pimentel thanked all participating UN Offices and Agencies, civil society organizations and keynote speakers for their insightful contributions. She also thanked Ms. Patten for spearheading this recommendation.

END