



COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Information note prepared by OHCHR for NGO participation

Functions of CEDAW

During its sessions the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) considers reports of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Following such consideration, the Committee formulates concluding observations that assist the State under review in the further implementation of the Convention. These concluding observations outline positive aspects, principal subjects of concern and the Committee's recommendations on how to address challenges faced by the State party. The reports of States parties, the lists of issues and questions, the concluding observations (once adopted) and other documentation for the sessions can be found on the secretariat's website at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/sessions.htm>

CEDAW members

The CEDAW Committee consists of 23 members, serving in their personal capacity. For details about the members of the Committee, please see <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/membership.htm>

NGO engagement with CEDAW

Since its early sessions, the Committee has invited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to follow its work and this is reflected in its rules of procedure. In order to ensure that it is as well informed as possible, the Committee and the pre-session working group welcome representatives of national and international NGOs to provide country-specific information on States parties whose reports are before it. This can be done orally or in writing. The Committee encourages international NGOs and United Nations organizations, funds and programmes to facilitate attendance at Committee sessions by representatives of national NGOs.

NGO reports for CEDAW sessions

The Committee welcomes country-specific information from NGOs. Once received, OHCHR posts documents containing this information on its website, under the relevant CEDAW session and makes it available to the members of the Committee in a CD rom two weeks before the session. Coordination of report writing amongst NGOs is highly encouraged.

When and how to submit information

Submissions should be sent to the secretariat of the Committee *two weeks prior* to the session by email (in pdf format) and by post (40 copies of each submission). All submissions should arrive

two weeks prior to the beginning of the session to the secretariat of the Committee. Please check the website for precise details of dates. All submissions to CEDAW should:

1. Identify the full name of the NGO;
2. Indicate the country for which the information relates to; and
3. Be sent electronically in pdf form (not word) and thereafter in 40 copies by post.

NGOs can also email their reports to IWRAW Asia Pacific, an NGO that has made arrangements with the Committee to distribute NGO shadow reports electronically and/or in hard copy directly to CEDAW members in advance of the session. Please contact IWRAW Asia-Pacific for further details: 80-B, Jalan Bangsar, 59200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: + 60322822255, fax: +60322832552, email: iwraw-ap@iwraw-ap.org; iwraw_ap@yahoo.com

OHCHR does not photocopy reports received from NGOs but makes them available on a CD rom for members. NGOs not attending a session/pre-session working group are urged to ensure that the requisite number of hard copies of their reports/information reach OHCHR in time for the respective session, i.e. at least two weeks in advance. Reports received electronically are made available to CEDAW members in a reference file only.

[NGO reports for CEDAW pre-session working group](#)

NGOs are encouraged to submit their reports or other country specific information to the pre-session working group. During the pre-session, the working group prepares lists of issues and questions which are subsequently sent to each State scheduled to be considered *two sessions later*. NGO representatives attending the pre-session working group should send their submissions in pdf form and bring 15 copies for distribution at the meeting of the pre-session working group with the NGOs two weeks ahead of the pre-session. NGOs can also avail themselves of the support of IWRAW Asia Pacific for advance dissemination, either electronically or as hard copies, of their alternative reports to the members of the pre-session working group. For details and deadlines, please contact IWRAW Asia-Pacific.

[NGO attendance at CEDAW's session or pre-session working group](#)

The Committee has set aside time at its sessions for NGOs to provide **oral** information in respect of countries being considered during that week. For details of dates, please see information note for the respective session or the provisional agenda (both available on the website).

- Coordination of statements

Oral interventions by NGOs must be concise. On average, not more than 10 minutes overall are allocated for all NGOs wishing to intervene on one particular country. Efforts to share the available time amongst the NGOs wishing to speak on a country is encouraged and appreciated. NGOs making oral interventions should ensure that they have a written copy of their statements for interpretation purposes. There is no need to send the oral statement in advance.

- How to submit

NGO representatives wishing to address the Committee or pre-session working group are requested to submit the full title of their NGO, the names of their representatives, and the proposed dates of attendance to the OHCHR at cedaw@ohchr.org no later than a week prior to the beginning of the session or working group so that arrangements can be made for the issuance of United Nations ground passes to enter United Nations premises.

- How to attend

To receive the ground pass, all applicants are required to bring a valid national passport or government issued photo ID such as driver's license or state non-driver's ID bearing a photograph, and appear in person at the Pass and Identification Unit, Security and Safety Section, Pregny Gate, United Nations Office at Geneva, 8-14 Avenue de la Paix. The office hours are 8.00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday. Prior to this NGOs must contact OHCHR to be placed on the list of accredited by the Secretariat. This should be done by email to cedaw@ohchr.org

NGO side events

NGOs can organize side events during the session of CEDAW for members of the Committee. Kindly contact the secretariat on cedaw@ohchr.org at least two weeks in advance of the session indicating the focus of the side event. The secretariat will inform you if it is possible to accommodate the requests in light of all requests received and availability of Committee members. NGOs have access to a separate room for briefing sessions and must contact the secretariat to arrange separate briefing time or arrange side events: cedaw@ohchr.org

Secretariat of CEDAW

The Secretariat for CEDAW is responsible for assisting the Committee and forms part of the Human Rights Treaty Branch of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). For detailed information on past and upcoming sessions of the Committee, in particular which States that are scheduled to report to the Committee, as well as for session-specific information addressed to NGOs and others interested in following the Committee's work, see "Information for NGOs" on the session page, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/index.htm>. Please note that OHCHR will not send letters of invitation to NGOs to attend CEDAW sessions and that OHCHR is unable to assist with travel or accommodation costs relating to the participation.

How to contact the secretariat

Postal address: CEDAW secretariat, UNOG-OHCHR, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Email: cedaw@ohchr.org

Visiting address: Palais Wilson, 52 Rue des Pâquis, 1201, Geneva, Switzerland

Website: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/index.htm
