



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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**Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women**
Fifty-second session
9-27 July 2012

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Samoa

1. The Committee considered the combined fourth and fifth periodic report of Samoa (CEDAW/C/WSM/4-5) at its 1055th and 1056th meetings, on 19 July 2012 (see CEDAW/C/SR.1055 and 1056). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/WSM/Q/4-5 and the responses of the Government of Samoa are contained in CEDAW/C/WSM/Q/4-5/Add.1.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee takes note of the State party's submission of its combined fourth and fifth periodic report, which in general, followed the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of reports, however, it regrets that the report was overdue and lacked recent data, disaggregated by sex. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its oral presentation, the written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by its pre-session working group and the further clarifications to the questions posed orally by the Committee.

3. The Committee commends the State party's high level delegation, headed by H.E., Mrs. Gatoloaifaana Amataga Gidlow, the Associate Minister for Women, Community and Social Development of Samoa, and which also included several representatives from relevant ministries, with expertise in the areas covered by the Convention. The Committee appreciates the open and constructive dialogue that took place between the delegation and the members of the Committee, while noting that answers to some questions were vague and some questions were left unanswered.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the adoption of its previous concluding observations in 2005, including the legislative reforms that have been

undertaken and the adoption of a range of legislative measures. Specific reference is made to the:

- a. Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act (2012);
 - b. Education Act (2009);
 - c. Community Justice Act (2008);
 - d. Tobacco Control Act (2008);
 - e. Mental Health Act (2007);
 - f. Health care Professions Registrations and Standards Act (2007);
 - g. Nursing and Midwifery Act (2007).
5. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the following policies:
- a. National Plan for the Advancement of Women 2008-2012;
 - b. National HIV/AIDS Prevention Policy (2011);
 - c. National NCD Prevention and Control Policy (2011);
 - d. National Reproductive Health Policy (2010);
 - e. National Policy on Persons with Disabilities (2009).
6. The Committee notes with appreciation the establishment of the Law Reform Commission to review the compliance of the national legislation with the international instruments that have been ratified by the State party, including the Convention.
7. The Committee welcomes the accession by the State party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 2008.

C. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

8. The Committee recalls the obligation of the State party to systematically and continuously implement all the provisions of the Convention and views the concerns and recommendations identified in the present concluding observations as requiring the priority attention of the State party between now and the submission of the next periodic report. Consequently, the Committee urges the State party to focus on those areas in its implementation activities and to report on actions taken and results achieved in its next periodic report. The Committee calls upon the State party to submit the present concluding observations to all relevant ministries, to the Parliament, and to the judiciary, so as to ensure their full implementation.

Parliament

9. **While reaffirming that the Government has the primary responsibility and is particularly accountable for the full implementation of the obligations of the State party under the Convention, the Committee stresses that the Convention is binding on all branches of Government, and it invites the State party to encourage the Parliament, in line with its procedures, where appropriate, to take the necessary steps with regard to the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the Government's next reporting process under the Convention.**

Visibility of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations

10. The Committee is concerned at the general lack of awareness of the Convention, its concept of substantive gender equality and of the Committee's general recommendations in the State party, in particular, among the judiciary and other law enforcement officials. It is further concerned that women themselves, especially those in rural and remote areas, are not aware of their rights under the Convention, and thus lack the necessary information to claim their rights.

11. **The Committee calls on the State party to:**

(a) **Take the necessary steps to ensure the adequate dissemination of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations among all stakeholders, including Government ministries, parliamentarians, the judiciary, law enforcement officers and community leaders, so as to create awareness of women's human rights and establish firmly in the country a legal culture supportive of women's equality and non-discrimination; and**

(b) **Take all appropriate measures to enhance women's awareness of their rights and the means to enforce them, in particular, in rural and remote areas, including through providing women with information on the Convention, through the use of all appropriate measures, such as the cooperation with civil society and the media.**

Legal status of the Convention and definition of discrimination against women

12. The Committee is concerned that, although the State party ratified the Convention in 1992 without reservations and established the Law Reform Commission in 2008 to review the compliance of national legislation with it, the Convention has still not been fully domesticated as part of national law. The Committee further expresses its concern that the State party has yet to adopt and incorporate into the Constitution or other relevant legislation a definition of discrimination against women, including direct and indirect discrimination, in line with article 1 of the Convention.

13. **The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/WSM/CC/1-3, para. 21) and urges the State party:**

(a) **To accord high priority to the process of fully incorporating the Convention into its domestic legal system to give central importance to the Convention as the basis for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women; and**

(b) **To include in the Constitution or in other appropriate domestic legislation a definition of discrimination against women in line with article 1 of the Convention.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

14. While welcoming the efforts by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development to ensure women's development across all sectors in the State party, including the adoption of a national plan for the advancement of women covering the period 2008-2012, the Committee is concerned that only 21 of the 104 people working in the Ministry deal with gender issues and that only 10 per

cent of the general budget is allocated to the advancement of women, which may not be sufficient to ensure that gender equality policies are properly developed and fully implemented throughout the work of all ministries and Government offices.

15. The Committee encourages the State party:

(a) **To expeditiously strengthen the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development by providing it with adequate human, financial and technical resources for it to coordinate and work effectively for the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes across all sectors and levels of the Government; and**

(b) **To strengthen its impact assessment mechanisms so as to ensure that its gender equality policies are properly monitored and evaluated and their implementation assessed.**

National human rights institutions

16. While noting the existence of the Office of the Ombudsman in the State party, the Committee is concerned that the institution is poorly resourced and rarely used to pursue complaints. While noting the information provided by the State party that it has received international technical and financial assistance towards the establishment of a human rights commission under the Office of the Ombudsman and has drafted a strategic plan on the requirements for the establishment of the institution, the Committee is concerned at the lack of information about the time frame for such establishment.

17. The Committee urges the State party to establish, within a clear time frame, an independent national human rights institution, in accordance with the Principles relating to the status of national institutions (the Paris Principles).

Temporary special measures

18. While noting that the proposal for the establishment of a 10 per cent quota for women in Parliament is being discussed, the Committee is concerned, first, that this quota is insufficient and, second, that the State party appears to have an insufficient understanding of the purpose of and need for temporary special measures in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25 of the Committee. The Committee is therefore concerned that temporary special measures are not systematically applied as a strategy necessary to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality of women and men in areas covered by the Convention, especially those of employment, participation in political and public life and others in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged.

19. The Committee encourages the State party to adopt temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention, as interpreted in general recommendation No. 25 of the Committee, in all areas covered by the Convention in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged. To that end, it recommends that the State party:

(a) **Set time-bound targets and allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of strategies, such as outreach and support programmes, the creation of quotas and other proactive and results-oriented measures aimed at**

achieving substantive equality of women and men in all areas, in particular in the areas of employment and participation in political and public life; and

(b) Raise awareness among Members of Parliament, Government officials, employers and the general public about the need for temporary special measures and provide comprehensive information on the use of such measures and their impact in its subsequent periodic report.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

20. The Committee recognizes the rich culture and traditions of the State party and their importance in daily life. The Committee expresses its serious concern, however, about the persistence of harmful norms, practices, traditions, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life, in addition to the State party's limited efforts to tackle such discriminatory practices. These include, in particular, women's limited access to family chiefly titles (*matai*), discrimination against women married to untitled men and the practice of banishing families from the village by village councils. The Committee is concerned that such customs and practices perpetuate discrimination against women and girls and that they are reflected in women's disadvantaged and unequal status in many areas, including education, public life and decision-making, and in the persistence of violence against women, and that, to date, the State party has not taken sustained measures to modify or eliminate stereotypes and negative traditional values and practices.

21. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To put in place, without delay, a comprehensive strategy to modify or eliminate patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes that discriminate against women, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention. Such measures should include efforts, in collaboration with civil society and community leaders, to educate and raise awareness of the subject, targeting women and men at all levels of society;

(b) To expand public education programmes, in particular in rural areas;

(c) To use innovative measures that target the media to strengthen understanding of the equality of women and men and to use the education system to enhance a positive and non-stereotypical portrayal of women; and

(d) To monitor and review the measures taken so as to assess their impact and to take appropriate action.

Violence against women

22. While noting that the new Family Safety Bill 2010 and Crimes Bill 2011, in which marital rape is recognized as a criminal offence, have been drafted and presented for discussion in Parliament, the Committee expresses its concern at the high prevalence of violence, in particular domestic and sexual violence, against women in the State party and at the lack of information and statistical data on its nature, extent and causes. The Committee is deeply concerned that violence against women appears to be socially legitimized and accompanied by a culture of silence and impunity and that notwithstanding cases of violence are therefore underreported, it being considered a private issue that should remain within the

family. The Committee notes with concern that, the establishment in 2007 of the Domestic Violence Unit within the Ministry of Police and Prisons, the victim protection services and enforcement measures are insufficient, as the State party has yet to establish a shelter for women victims of violence.

23. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) **To put in place comprehensive measures to prevent and address violence against women and girls, recognizing that such violence is a form of discrimination against women and constitutes a violation of their human rights under the Convention and ensuring that women and girls who are victims of violence have access to immediate means of redress and protection and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished, in accordance with general recommendation No. 19 of the Committee;**

(b) **To provide mandatory training for judges and prosecutors on the strict application of legal provisions dealing with violence against women and to train police officers in procedures to deal with women victims of violence;**

(c) **To encourage women to report incidents of domestic and sexual violence by de-stigmatizing victims and raising awareness about the criminal nature of such acts;**

(d) **To provide adequate assistance and protection to women victims of violence by establishing shelters, especially in rural areas, and enhancing cooperation with non-governmental organizations providing shelter and rehabilitation to victims; and**

(e) **To collect statistical data on domestic and sexual violence disaggregated by sex, age, nationality and relationship between victim and perpetrator.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

24. The Committee is concerned at the lack of statistical data, disaggregated by sex and location, on trafficking and exploitation of prostitution in the State party. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of efforts to prevent the exploitation of prostitution and to address its root causes, and the lack of protection and services available to victims of exploitation. The Committee is further concerned that the State party has ratified none of the international instruments in the area of combating trafficking and exploitation of prostitution.

25. The Committee calls upon the State party to fully implement article 6 of the Convention and:

(a) **To include in its subsequent report information and data on the prevalence trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution;**

(b) **To conduct studies and surveys for the above purpose, including on the prevalence of prostitution, and to seek international assistance as required;**

(c) **To address the root causes of trafficking and prostitution, including poverty, in order to eliminate the vulnerability of girls and women to sexual exploitation and trafficking, and to strive to ensure the recovery and social integration of victims; and**

(d) **To ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and other relevant international instruments.**

Participation in political and public life

26. The Committee is concerned at the underrepresentation of women at all levels of political and public life, in particular in Parliament, the judiciary, the diplomatic service and other decision-making bodies in education and administration and the Cabinet. The Committee is further concerned that women are required to hold a chiefly title (*matai*) to stand for political office and that although there had been a slight increase in the number of women on whom such chiefly titles are being bestowed notwithstanding, some villages maintain the ban on female *matai* and prevent them from participating in village councils. The Committee is also concerned that systematic barriers such as negative cultural attitudes, lack of an adequate quota system, insufficient capacity-building for potential candidates, limited financial resources and lack of logistical support impede women's equal participation in political life.

27. **The Committee calls upon the State party:**

(a) **To review the use of temporary special measures according to article 4 (1) of the Convention and general recommendations No. 23 and No. 25 of the Committee, and to establish adequate quotas with the aim of accelerating the equal representation of women in all areas of public and professional life, especially in decision-making positions and in local administration;**

(b) **To ensure that women, with or without a chiefly title, enjoy equal opportunities to participate in political and public life, including in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and community projects; and**

(c) **To provide training on gender equality for politicians, journalists, teachers and community leaders, especially men, to enhance the understanding that full, equal, free and democratic participation of women on an equal basis with men in political and public life is a requirement for the full implementation of the Convention.**

Education

28. The Committee welcomes the State party's National Education for All Programme and Action Plan and commends the State party on the progress achieved in the education of girls and women, as reflected by the attainment of parity in primary education. The Committee is, however, concerned at the high dropout rates between the primary and secondary levels (46 per cent) and the lack of information on tertiary enrolment. While noting the adoption by the State party in 2009 of the Education Act providing zero tolerance for corporal punishment in schools, the Committee is concerned at the high number of girls who are victims of sexual abuse and harassment in schools by teachers. The Committee is further concerned at the high dropout rate and the low retention and completion rates for girls, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels, owing to teenage pregnancy, discriminatory traditional and cultural practices and poverty, especially in rural areas. The

Committee is also concerned that the traditional views of both students and teachers orient female students into areas of study perceived as appropriate to their social roles and participation in public life.

29. The Committee urges the State party to enhance its compliance with article 10 of the Convention and to raise awareness of the importance of education as a human right and as the basis for the empowerment of women. To this end, it urges the State party:

(a) **To address barriers to the education of women and girls, such as negative cultural attitudes and excessive domestic duties, to take steps to reduce and prevent dropouts among girls and to strengthen the implementation of re-entry policies enabling girls who drop out to return to school;**

(b) **To implement measures to eliminate traditional stereotypes and structural barriers that might deter girls from enrolling in science and mathematics education at the secondary and tertiary levels;**

(c) **To step up efforts to provide girls with career counselling that exposes them to non-traditional career paths, in particular in technical-vocational areas;**

(d) **To provide safe educational environments free from discrimination and violence and to institute measures to protect girls from sexual harassment and violence in schools, in particular in rural areas;**

(e) **To strengthen awareness-raising and training for school officials and students, and for children through the media, and to establish reporting and accountability mechanisms to ensure that perpetrators of sexual abuse and harassment in schools are prosecuted and punished; and**

(f) **To ensure that the attention paid to underperformance of boys does not result in a refocus of policies and strategies away from girls and their educational needs.**

Employment

30. While noting that the new Labour and Relations Bill 2011, which takes into account standards and principles of the Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (Convention No. 100) and the Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (Convention No. 111), has passed first and second readings in Parliament, the Committee is concerned at the continuing vertical and horizontal occupational segregation and the persistent wage gap between women and men. The Committee is also concerned that, as acknowledged by the State party, formal employment opportunities are limited and women are concentrated in the informal sector where there are no benefits such as social security. The Committee is further concerned that maternity leave in both the public and private sectors is not in line with international standards.

31. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) **To accord high priority to the adoption of the Labour and Relations Bill within a specific time frame;**

(b) **To establish a regulatory framework for the informal sector with a view to providing women with access to social security and other benefits;**

(c) **To ratify the ILO Convention No.103 concerning maternity protection and the ILO Convention No.156 on parental leave, and to adopt provisions to extend maternity leave in both the public and private sectors to 14 weeks; and**

(d) **To take temporary special measures to eliminate both vertical and horizontal occupational segregation so as to narrow and close the gap between women and men, in accordance with the International Labour Organization conventions.**

Health

32. While welcoming the adoption of the Health Sector Plan 2008-2018, the Committee is concerned about the status of women's health, in particular that of women in rural areas who experience difficulties in gaining access to affordable and appropriate health care in a timely manner. The Committee is also concerned about the high rate of teenage pregnancies and the fact that existing sex education programmes are insufficient and may not pay suitable attention to all aspects of prevention, including prevention of sexually transmitted infections, given the high rate of sexually transmitted infections in the State party (according to a 2008 survey, 32.8 per cent of the population have at least one sexually transmitted infection). The Committee is also concerned that abortion is a criminal offence incurring a penalty of seven years' imprisonment and that this prohibition leads women to seek unsafe, illegal abortions, with consequent risks to their life and health. The Committee is also concerned that 46 per cent of women have limited access to high-quality reproductive and sexual health services, especially in rural areas, and are unable to gain access to some birth control methods without the consent of a parent or partner.

33. **The Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To take all measures necessary to improve women's access to health care and health-related services, within the framework of general recommendation No. 24 of the Committee;**

(b) **To review the current laws on abortion with a view to removing punitive provisions imposed on women who undergo abortions and provide them with access to high-quality services for the management of complications arising from unsafe abortions;**

(c) **To strengthen and expand efforts to increase knowledge of and access to affordable contraceptive methods throughout the country and to ensure that women in rural and remote areas do not face barriers in gaining access to family planning information and services; and**

(d) **To widely promote education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, targeting adolescent girls and boys and paying special attention to early pregnancy and control of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.**

Rural women

34. The Committee expresses its concern at the disadvantaged position of women in rural areas who form the majority of women in the State party (78 per cent) and

who experience poverty, difficulties in gaining access to health and social services and a lack of participation in decision-making processes at the community level. The Committee is further concerned that notwithstanding the development of the Water for Life: Water Sector Plan and Framework Action 2008-2013 and the independent water schemes associations, rural women experience limited access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation. While noting that the State party is currently reviewing the Lands and Titles Act to amend existing discriminatory provisions, the Committee is concerned at the prevalence of discriminatory customs and traditional practices that prevent rural women in particular from inheriting or acquiring ownership of land and other property.

35. The Committee calls upon the State party:

(a) **To pay special attention to the needs of rural women to ensure that they enjoy access to health-care services, education, clean water, sanitation services and income-generating projects;**

(b) **To eliminate all forms of discrimination with regard to ownership, co-sharing and inheritance of land; and**

(c) **To address negative customs and traditional practices, especially in rural areas, which affect full enjoyment by women of the right to property.**

Women with disabilities

36. The Committee is concerned that, according to the *World Report on Disability*, published by the World Health Organization in 2011, at least 15 per cent of women in the State party have some kind of disability. While noting the adoption of a national policy on persons with disabilities and plan of action in 2009 by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development, the Committee is concerned that women with disabilities experience a high rate of poverty, lack access to education, employment and health services, especially in rural areas, and are absent from significant leadership roles and decision-making processes.

37. The Committee calls upon the State party to take proactive and results-oriented measures, including through the implementation of the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities and Plan of Action, to eliminate multiple forms of discrimination against women with disabilities and to protect their human rights and dignity.

Marriage and family relations

38. While noting with appreciation that the new Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act 2010 introduced new grounds for divorce, such as domestic violence, the Committee is concerned about the persistence of discriminatory customary laws and practices, especially in rural areas and remote communities, with regard to, inter alia, marriage and its dissolution, inheritance and property rights. The Committee is further concerned that the law provides for different ages of marriage for women and men — 16 years for women and 18 for men. The Committee is also concerned that the Family Court has not yet been established.

39. The Committee calls upon the State party to:

(a) **Amend without delay all discriminatory provisions and administrative regulations relating to family, marriage and divorce and take all**

necessary legislative measures to ensure women's equal share in all marital property;

(b) Raise the minimum age of marriage for women to 18 years, in line with article 16 (2) of the Convention, the Committee's general recommendation 21 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and

(c) Establish a Family Court to deal with cases related to family matters.

Data collection

40. The Committee is concerned at the general lack of available recent data provided by the State party. It notes that updated disaggregated data by, for example, sex, age, race, ethnicity, geographical location and socioeconomic background are necessary for an accurate assessment of the situation of women, to determine whether they suffer from discrimination, for informed and targeted policymaking, and for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved towards the realization of women's substantive equality with regard to all areas covered by the Convention.

41. **The Committee calls upon the State party to enhance the collection, analysis and dissemination of comprehensive data disaggregated by sex, age, race, ethnicity, location and socio-economic background, and of measurable indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and progress towards the realization of women's substantive equality in all areas covered by the Convention. In this regard, it draws the State party's attention to the Committee's general recommendation No. 9 (1989) on statistical data concerning the situation of women and encourages the State party to develop gender-sensitive indicators which could be used in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and, if necessary, review of women's and gender equality policies.**

Optional Protocol

42. **The Committee calls upon the State party to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention.**

Amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention

43. **The Committee encourages the State party to accelerate the acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

44. **The Committee urges the State party, in the implementation of its obligations under the Convention, to fully utilize the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which reinforce the provisions of the Convention, and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.**

Millennium Development Goals

45. **The Committee emphasizes that full and effective implementation of the Convention is indispensable for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It calls for the integration of a gender perspective and an explicit reflection of the provisions of the Convention in all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Millennium Development**

Goals and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

Dissemination

46. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Samoa of the present concluding observations in order to make the people, government officials, politicians, parliamentarians and women's and human rights organizations, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure the de jure and de facto equality of women, as well as the further steps that are required in this regard. The Committee recommends that the dissemination should include the local community level. The State party is encouraged to organize a series of meetings to discuss progress achieved in the implementation of these observations. The Committee requests the State party to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".

Ratification of other treaties

47. The Committee notes that the adherence of the State party to the nine major international human rights instruments¹ would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State party to consider ratifying the treaties to which it is not yet a party, i.e. the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the International Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Technical assistance

48. The Committee recommends that the State party consider seeking cooperation and technical assistance in the development and implementation of a comprehensive programme aimed at the implementation of the above recommendations and the Convention as a whole. The Committee also calls upon the State party to strengthen further its cooperation with specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Statistics Division, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations

¹ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention of the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Population Fund, the World Health Organization, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Follow-up to concluding observations

49. The Committee requests the state party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 14 and 28 above.

Preparation of next report

50. The Committee requests the State party to ensure the wide participation of all ministries and public bodies in the preparation of its next report, as well as to consult a variety of women's and human rights organizations during that phase.

51. The Committee requests the State party to respond to concerns expressed in the present concluding observations in its next periodic report under article 18 of the Convention. The Committee invites the State party to submit its next periodic report in July 2016.

52. The Committee invites the State party to follow the "Harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents", approved at the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting of the human rights treaty bodies in June 2006 (see HRI/MC/2006/3 and Corr.1). The treaty-specific reporting guidelines, adopted by the Committee at its fortieth session, in January 2008, must be applied in conjunction with the harmonized reporting guidelines on a common core document. Together they constitute the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. The treaty-specific document should be limited to 40 pages, while the updated common core document should not exceed 80 pages.