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5. At its forty-fifth session, the Committee considered the reports of eight States parties: Botswana (CEDAW/C/BOT/3), Egypt (CEDAW/C/EGY/7), Malawi

Dates of future sessions of the Committee

17. The Committee confirmed the dates of its sessions in 2010, as follows:

Forty-sixth session:

- (a) Seventeenth session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: 7-9 July 2010, New York;
- (b) Plenary: 12-30 July 2010, New York;
- (c) Pre-session working group for the forty-eighth session: 2-6 August 2010, New York;

Forty-seventh session:

- (a) Eighteenth session of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol: 29 September-1 October 2010, Geneva;
- (b) Plenary: 4-22 October 2010, Geneva;
- (c) Pre-session working group for the forty-ninth session: 25-29 October 2010, Geneva.

Reports to be considered at future sessions of the Committee

D. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising from article 2 of the Optional Protocol

19. At its forty-fourth and forty-fifth sessions, the Committee endorsed the report of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol on its fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth sessions. Upon the recommendation of the Working Group, the Committee decided to revise its model communication form. The Committee also adopted a fact sheet on the submission of individual communications under the Optional Protocol. The Committee took action on communication No. 12/2007 and No. 13/2007.

20. The Committee considered follow-up information to the views of the Committee. Upon the recommendation of the Working Group, the Committee decided to close its follow-up procedure in relation to communication No. 5/2005, , and No. 6/2005,

5. The Bali Action Plan that emerged from the thirteenth Conference of Parties to UNFCCC reaffirms that economic and social development and poverty eradication are global priorities, and affirms that a shared vision needs to take into account “social and economic conditions and other relevant factors” (see FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1, decision 1/CP.13, preamble and paragraph 1 (a)). Gender equality, including equal participation of women and men and accounting for the differentiated impacts on women and men from climate change and its response measures, should be included in UNFCCC agreements, in alignment with various international agreements, including but not limited to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action, and Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/31.

6. Gender equality is essential to the successful initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate change policies. The Committee calls on States parties to include gender equality as an overarching guiding principle in the UNFCCC agreement expected at the fifteenth Conference of Parties in Copenhagen.

Annex II

Thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention and tenth anniversary of the adoption of its Optional Protocol by the General Assembly

In view of the celebration in 2009 of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention and the tenth anniversary of the adoption of its Optional Protocol by the General Assembly, the Committee decided to urge all States which had not yet acceded to or ratified the Convention and/or its Optional Protocol to do so as soon as possible. It also decided to encourage all States parties to these instruments to celebrate those anniversaries at the national level.

7. The protection of the human rights of women is as important as providing immediate medical attention, food and shelter. The Committee urges emergency assistance teams to put in place a coordinated security system and to take all necessary measures to protect women and children and the most vulnerable.

8. The Committee urges that a gender perspective be included in the assessment, design and implementation phases of humanitarian relief in order for it to be effective and to restore the dignity of the affected population in general and women

Annex V

Statement on the inclusion of Afghan women in the process of peacebuilding, security and reconstruction in Afghanistan

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which is mandated to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by 186 States parties, including Afghanistan, welcomes the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and its international allies on the new commitment to help secure a peaceful, prosperous and democratic future for Afghanistan, which were initiated at the 28 January 2010 London conference hosted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
2. The Committee wishes to remind the Government of Afghanistan and its international allies of the unique role and contribution of women in the timely resolution of crises and conflicts. The Committee also draws the attention of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), which underscore women's active participation in all peacebuilding efforts and recovery.
3. The Committee accordingly expresses its regret and deep concern about the exclusion of Afghan women from the high decision-making level of the conference and the absence of clear strategies to protect women's rights in the process of the discussions leading to negotiations with representatives of the Taliban. Any agreement reached with the Taliban should include a clear commitment for the respect and protection of women's human rights, as set out in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international human rights treaties to which Afghanistan is party.
4. The Committee emphasizes that Afghan women, who constitute the majority of the Afghan population, must be full and equal participants in decision-making, at all levels, in the process of peacebuilding, reconciliation, reconstruction, rebuilding and development of their country. Their voices and views, as well as their capacities, are fundamental and necessary for the sustainable establishment of a prosperous and peaceful Afghanistan, based on the rule of law, democracy, justice, human rights and gender equality. In that regard, the Committee urges the Government of Afghanistan and its international allies to ensure that women representatives are included in the upcoming peace and development dialogues and negotiations with the Taliban.
5. The Committee is concerned with the late submission of Afghanistan's initial and second reports under article 18 of the Convention and encourages the State party to seek technical assistance in the preparation of the report so as to be able to submit it as soon as possible. The Committee encourages the State party to consult civil society, particularly women's organizations, in the preparation of the report.
6. The Committee further urges the State party to give special attention to a critical review of all discriminatory laws and provisions, based on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In particular, the Committee is concerned about the new personal status law of the Shiite minorities and its discriminatory nature against women. The Committee reminds the Government of Afghanistan of its obligations under the Convention, particularly articles 2, 9 and 16, and urges the Government to repeal and modify the discriminatory provisions in the personal status and other laws.

Annex VI

Statement on the relationship of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women with parliamentarians

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-first session, the Committee adopted a standard paragraph on “parliament” in its concluding observations in order to draw to the attention of State parties the importance of involving their parliaments in the reporting process under article 18 of the Convention and the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention.

2. The aim of the present note is to clarify and strengthen the role of national parliaments vis-à-vis the Convention. The present note is also aimed at clarifying the relationship between the Committee and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

II. Role of parliaments in the process of ratification of the Convention and its Optional Protocol and withdrawal of reservations

3. The procedure for ratification of and accession to international instruments, as well as for the withdrawal of reservations, varies from State to State. In most States, approval by parliament is necessary before the depositn the reportlis23[appror)-roaryar2(e4TD()Tjh)-7

withdraw them and to fulfil their obligations. The Secretary-General of IPU writes to the presidents of the legislative assemblies to inform them about the upcoming consideration of the report of their country by the Committee. Once the Committee's concluding observations are available, a letter is sent to the parliament concerned to bring to its attention the recommendations adopted. In 2003, IPU, with the assistance of the Division for the Advancement of Women, published a practical guide for the use of parliamentarians on the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Every year, IPU organizes briefings on the Convention, which are addressed to women parliamentarians in particular. IPU also provides, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, technical assistance programmes in order to build the capacities of parliaments and help them fulfil their role regarding the implementation of the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Since 2006, IPU also provides the Committee with country-specific information, including data on the political participation of women in parliament and in government, as well as at the local level, with regard to States whose reports are under consideration by the Committee.

VI. Recommendations

10. The Committee recommends that States parties ensure the full participation of parliament and its members in the reporting process and the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocol.
11. Given the key role of parliaments, the Committee recommends that States parties ensure that parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, be made aware and informed of the Committee's work so that they may take it into account in their legislative functions and relay it to their constituencies and to the public at large.
12. The Committee recommends that States parties ensure that all relevant information is made available to parliamentarians on a regular basis through appropriate parliamentary support services.
13. The Committee further recommends that information received by Governments on their obligations as States parties and other matters of concern is brought to the attention of parliamentarians.
14. The Committee recommends that, whenever members of the Committee are invited to visit a State party, it is desirable that the State party organize meetings with parliamentarians.
15. The Committee encourages States parties to include in their reports information on all parliamentary initiatives in the elaboration of laws in order to ensure full incorporation of provisions of the Convention into domestic legislation.
16. The Committee reiterates the importance of

18. The Committee encourages States parties to include in their delegations before the Committee for the examination of their report members of parliament, as well as a special adviser in charge of relations between the government and the parliament, in order to improve the visibility of parliamentary responsibilities.

19. The Committee calls on States parties to evaluate their collaboration with their national parliaments and other parliaments and to take appropriate measures to enhance cooperation between parliaments in order to exchange best practices on the implementation of the Convention.

Annex VII

Role of non-governmental organizations in the Committee reporting process

5. The Committee, through its rules of procedure and its practice of informal meetings with non-governmental organizations, has created a space for non-governmental organizations to play a constructive role in the reporting process and the review by the Committee of the compliance of States parties with their obligations under the Convention.

6. Taking note of the fact that consideration of the reports of States parties by the Committee is based on a constructive dialogue with States parties, the Committee considers it necessary that this dialogue be based on information received not only by States parties, United Nations entities and national human rights institutions, but also from non-governmental organizations in order to ensure a constructive dialogue.

7. Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide submissions concerning the reports of States parties relating to the implementation of some or all the provisions of the Convention or specific themes focusing on gaps in implementation of the Convention or the Committee's concluding observations. Non-governmental organizations may provide comments and suggestions to the State party's reports in any way they see fit.

Consultation and inputs into the State party report

8. The Committee recommends that States parties consult non-governmental organizations when they prepare the State report and that they make the report available to all sectors of civil society. The State party is encouraged to invite non-governmental organizations to provide their input. This does not imply that non-governmental organizations should take over the writing of the report or undertake a joint reporting with the State party. At all times, the report has to be the report of the State party. Furthermore, the role played by non-governmental organizations in providing information for the report of the State party should not exclude the possibility of submitting their own reports. The Committee often raises questions with States parties, asking whether non-governmental organizations have been consulted in the writing of the report and whether there has been collaboration and transparency in the reporting process.

Submissions by non-governmental organizations and presentation of oral information to the Committee's pre-sessional working group

9. The Committee stresses that it is highly desirable that reports of non-governmental organizations be received in a timely manner for consideration by the Committee's pre-sessional working group. It also welcomes the participation of non-governmental organizations at the pre-sessional working group meeting for oral presentations and clarifications with regard to the information provided, with the aim of preparing the list of issues and questions, which is composed of some 30 questions. It is particularly valuable to have the input of non-governmental organizations at this early stage of the reporting process.

Submissions by non-governmental organizations and presentation of oral information at the meetings of the Committee

10. The Committee welcomes written reports from non-governmental organizations submitted to the Committee, oral presentations by non-governmental organizations to the Committee during the session and the presence of non-governmental organizations as observers during the examination of the State party by the Committee. In the past few years, the practice of the Committee has been to provide a time slot for its public informal meeting with non-governmental organizations in its agenda on the first day of the first and second week of each session. During these informal meetings, non-governmental organizations make oral presentations of their written reports and respond to additional questions by Committee members. There are additional opportunities for non-governmental organizations to provide detailed information to the Committee during informal lunch-hour briefings (side events). These briefings are usually held the day before the review of a report of a State party.^b

Reports by non-governmental organizations under the Committee's follow-up procedure

11. The Committee adopted a follow-up procedure to its concluding observations at its forty-first session, and decided on its methodology at its forty-fifth session, whereby a State party is requested to submit information within one or two years on action taken to implement the recommendations selected under the follow-up procedure. Usually, two recommendations are selected for the procedure. Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to submit information for the attention of the Committee by the same deadline as the State party. All information received under this procedure is made available on the Committee's website.^c

Submissions by non-governmental organizations on situations warranting exceptional reports

12. Whenever the Committee requests an exceptional report in line with article 18, paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention and its rules of procedure, non-governmental organizations are encouraged to submit their own reports on situations warranting such exceptional reports.

Inputs to the elaboration and use of the Committee's general recommendations

13. The Committee encourages non-governmental organizations to provide inputs on general recommendations that are under elaboration and to make use of the Committee's general recommendations in their advocacy efforts.

Utilization of the Convention and the procedures under its Optional Protocol

14. A non-governmental organization may provide assistance to alleged individual victims or groups of victims of human rights violations under the Convention by submitting communications to the Committee under its communications procedure

^b For details of the procedures to follow, kindly refer to the non-governmental note for each session, available on the website.

^c For detailed information about the follow-up procedure, please see www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/followup.htm.

on behalf of such individuals or groups of individuals. Non-governmental organizations may also, in appropriate situations, provide reliable information on grave or systematic violations of women's human rights in relation to the mandate of the Committee to conduct an inquiry under the Optional Protocol.

Enhancing global reach

15. The Committee welcomes input from national and international non-governmental organizations and notes that, owing to logistical and financial constraints, it is not always feasible for non-governmental organizations to attend the Committee's sessions in Geneva or New York. The Committee therefore welcomes the use of new technology, such as videoconference links and webcasting, for enhanced representations from all regions during its sessions.

16. The Committee welcomes enhanced outreach and awareness of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, its concluding observations, general recommendations, views and decisions, and recognizes the important role of non-governmental organizations in this process. It further encourages non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to contribute to the process of translation of Committee documents into local languages, with the aim of enhancing the outreach and awareness of the Convention and its Optional Protocol.

Annex VIII

Statement of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

1. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomes the 15-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, which will be conducted by the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2010. The Committee notes that the review takes place just after the thirtieth anniversary of the General Assembly's adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 18 December 1979.

2. The Committee commends the significant steps which have been taken by States to implement the commitments made at Beijing and during its five-year review. It welcomes the fact that, since Beijing, 42 States have ratified the Convention and that the ratification of only 8 more States is required before the goal of universal ratification established in the Platform is achieved. It encourages those States to become party to the Convention as soon as possible. The Committee is gratified that the Convention's Optional Protocol, adopted a little over 10 years ago, in 1999, has been adhered to by 99 States parties, thereby providing millions of women from all regions of the world with the right to petition the Committee in regard to alleged violations of the rights set out in the Convention and enabling the Committee itself to inquire into grave or systematic violations of the terms of the Convention. It is pleased that women are increasingly turning to this tool to ensure enjoyment of their rights, and that States parties have responded positively to the Committee's views and recommendations on individual complaints by removing discriminatory laws, policies and programmes, introducing proactive measures to comply with the Convention and providing individual petitioners with compensation. The Committee is also pleased that there has been steady progress in respect of reservations, with many States withdrawing or modifying those that they lodged on ratification. It encourages those States which maintain reservations to work towards their withdrawal, including by drawing on the experience of other States which have done so.

3. Through its review of the reports of States parties, the Committee has seen the progress States have made in realizing the human rights of women since the adoption of the Convention, and particularly since the Fourth World Conference on Women. States have paid increasing attention to creating a legal framework that promotes and protects women's rights, including through the introduction of temporary special measures to accelerate the achievement of equality between women and men. They have also put in place policies and programmes aimed at the practical realization of women's rights, as well as measures to challenge gender stereotypes that underpin discrimination against women in our societies, communities and families. This is a cause for celebration. At the same time, the Committee regrets that equality for women in law and practice has not been achieved in any country in the world. It is disturbed that women continue to suffer profound and pervasive human rights violations, including gender-based violence in

Annex X

Decision 45/II

Methodology to assess the reports of States parties received under the Committee's follow-up procedure

The Committee adopted its methodology to assess the reports of States parties received under its follow-up procedure, as well as the report of the follow-up rapporteur.
