

**Third Committee of the General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 63 (a)**

Statement by

**Ms. Dubravka Šimonovi
Chairperson
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
New York, 15 October 2007**

Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen

It is a great honour for me to address the Third Committee of the General Assembly for the first time in my capacity as Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

This week 25 years ago, from 18 to 22 October 1982, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women held its inaugural session. At that time, there were 42 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The meeting time allocated to the Committee was only one annual session of two weeks.

We celebrated this important anniversary at our thirty-ninth session on 23 July 2007, with the participation of high-level guests. We reflected on the Committee's history and accomplishments, and charted our future vision for the promotion of gender equality.

The Committee is a body of 23 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention. Since its inception, 107 women and 3 men from many different countries representing different legal systems and all regions of the world have served as members.

Much has been achieved in these 25 years. There are now 185 States parties to the Convention. The Committee has considered a total of 401 reports (many of these were combined reports) submitted by 154 States parties. It has adopted 25 general recommendations.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention was adopted by resolution A/RES/54/4 of 6 October 1999. As of today, it has been ratified or acceded to by 88 States. Under the terms of the Optional Protocol, the Committee is charged with implementing two procedures and, since its entry into force on 22 December 2000, the Committee has taken action on 10 communications submitted by individual women, and undertaken one inquiry.

The last two years, that is 2006 and 2007, have been exceptionally productive, thanks to the extended meeting time approve

Commissioner for Human Rights and officials of her Office. Next week, at the invitation of the Government of Switzerland, the Committee will hold a three-day informal working session in Geneva to discuss a number of substantive issues and matters pertaining to our working methods. We will also have an orientation session with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights intended to facilitate the transfer. On behalf of the Committee, I extend our sincere appreciation to the Government of Switzerland for this invitation.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Division for the Advancement of Women for the professional and dedicated support provided to the Committee during these past 25 years. The Committee looks forward to maintaining strong links with the Division in the future, or with any new structure within the United Nations that might be entrusted with the promotion of gender equality.

Thank you very much.