

United Nations  Nations Unies

19 July 2006

Dear Ms. Rao,

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women welcomes, and has always greatly benefited from the contributions of non-governmental organizations to the reporting process. It invites national and international non-governmental organizations to provide country-specific information on the States parties whose reports are before the Committee.

It is my great pleasure to extend to IWRAW Asia Pacific the Committee's appreciation for the valuable work done in promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women at the national level. The Committee specifically welcomes the efforts of IWRAW Asia Pacific in working with local NGOs from reporting countries, guiding them in the preparation of shadow reports and their presentation to the Committee. The Committee strongly welcomes that IWRAW Asia Pacific has over many years been able to bring representatives of NGOs from reporting countries to the Committee's sessions, thus allowing for an informal discussion between Committee experts and representatives of these organizations on the critical issues affecting implementation of the Convention. The Committee benefits from this inter-action with NGOs and appreciates the fact that their presence during the Committee's constructive dialogue with representatives of the reporting State may also constitute an important leverage for further strengthening of follow-up action to the Committee's concluding comments and, thus, enhanced implementation of the Convention.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish to commend IWRAW Asia Pacific for its continued excellent encouragement and support to national non-governmental organizations towards the preparation of shadow reports, for channelling this information so effectively to Committee experts, and for facilitating NGO attendance at the Committee's sessions.

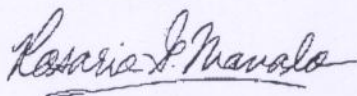
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The increased number of States to be considered annually by the Committee starting from 2006 provides an opportunity for the Committee to monitor the implementation of the Convention in a significantly larger number of countries annually than in the past. The Committee hopes that IWRAW Asia Pacific will continue to be in a position to work with local NGOs in all reporting States, and to bring representatives from such organizations to the designated sessions of the Committee when these reports will be considered. The Committee is aware that this welcome extension of meeting time also brings with it increased expectations for engagement by IWRAW Asia Pacific with local NGOs in a larger number of countries, and trusts that Governments and other international donors will take these new opportunities into account when making decisions about supporting IWRAW Asia Pacific in its valuable work.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish much continued success to IWRAW Asia Pacific.

Sincerely,



Rosario G. Manalo
Chairperson

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women