



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women**

Forty-eighth session

17 January – 4 February 2011

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

Belarus

1. The Committee considered the seventh periodic report of Belarus (CEDAW/C/BLR/7) at its 973rd and 974th meetings on 27 January 2011 (see CEDAW/C/SR.973 and 974). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/BLR/Q/7, and the responses of the Government of Belarus are contained in CEDAW/C/BLR/Q/7/Add.1.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its seventh periodic report, which was detailed, generally followed the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of reports, and included a section with information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Committee's previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/BLR/4-6). However, the report lacked sex-disaggregated statistics and qualitative data on the situation of women in a number of areas covered by the Convention, in particular in respect of women from disadvantaged groups. 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 clarification to the questions posed orally by the Committee.

3. The Committee commends the State party for its high-level delegation, which was headed by the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Belarus, and which included representatives of different Government ministries and departments. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue that took place between the delegation and the members of the Committee, while noting that some questions were not answered.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 3

February 2004, as well as its accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict in 2006.

5. The Committee welcomes the adoption and implementation, since the consideration of the last report, of several legislative measures aimed at achieving de jure and de facto equality of women and men, including:

- (a) Amendments to the Marriage and Family Code by Act No. 164-3 of 20 June 2006, relating to the equality of spouses in family relations;
- (b) Amendments to the Labour Code by Act No. 272-Z of 20 July 2007, providing for paid parental leave and other opportunities for fathers to participate in child-raising; and
- (c) The introduction of additional family benefits through, *inter alia*, Presidential Decree No. of 14 February 2006 and Decision No. 271 of the Council of Ministers of 1 March 2007.

6. The Committee notes with appreciation the measures adopted by the State party to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings, in particular women and girls, such as:

- (a) Presidential Decrees No. 3 of 9 March 2005 on measures to combat human trafficking and No. 352 of 8 August 2005 on averting the consequences of human trafficking;
- (b) The introduction of higher penalties for trafficking in human beings and related offences in the Criminal Code and in the Code on Administrative Offences by virtue of Act No. 15-3 of 4 May 2005; and
- (c) The adoption by Presidential Decree No. 624 of 6 December 2007 of a State Programme on Combating Human Trafficking, Illegal Migration and Related Illegal Acts for 2008-2010 aimed at reducing crimes related to trafficking, protecting and rehabilitating victims, and strengthening international cooperation in efforts to counter human trafficking.

7. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the percentage of women in the House of Representatives has increased to 31.8 percent during the 2008 elections to the House of Representatives, while the percentage of women elected to local government councils has risen to 45 percent.

8. The Committee notes with appreciation the good maternal and child health care services, including pre- and post-natal services, in the State party, where the vast majority of births are attended by skilled medical staff, resulting in a further decrease in the infant mortality rate.

C. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

9. 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 and government departments, to the House of Representatives and to the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly, as well as to the judiciary, so as to ensure their full implementation.

Parliament

10. 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. It invites the State party to encourage both chambers of its National Assembly, in line with its procedures, where appropriate, to take the necessary steps with regard to the implementation of the present concluding observations and the State party's next reporting process under the Convention.

Definition of equality and non-discrimination

11. The Committee, while noting that the general principles of equality and non-discrimination are guaranteed in article 22 of the Constitution and contained in domestic legislation, remains concerned about the absence of a specific prohibition of discrimination against women in all areas of life in its national legislation, in line with articles 1 and 2 of the Convention. It also notes the absence of a law on gender equality or of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation covering sex- and gender-based discrimination in the State party.

12. The Committee calls on the State party to consider adopting a law on gender equality or comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including a clear definition of all forms of discrimination against women, covering both direct and indirect discrimination, as well as a clear prohibition of intersecting forms of discrimination against women, in accordance with articles 1 and 2 of the Convention.

Visibility of the Convention, the Optional Protocol and the Committee's general recommendations

13. The Committee notes with concern that while the Convention forms integral part of the domestic law of the State party, in legal practice, it has not been given sufficient visibility as the legal basis for measures, including legislation and policy measures, for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and the promotion of gender equality in the State party. The Committee notes the absence of information about court proceedings where provisions of the Convention were directly invoked or applied, which indicates a continuing lack of awareness among women themselves and among the judiciary and legal professions about the rights of women under the Convention and its Optional Protocol, as well as about the Committee's general recommendations.

14. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation (CEDAW/C/BLR/4-6, at para. 342) and urges the State party to intensify its efforts to ensure that the Convention and its Optional Protocol, as well as the Committee's general recommendations and the views adopted on individual communications, are made an integral part of the training for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, police and other law enforcement officers, with a view to enabling them to directly apply and interpret national legal provisions in light of the Convention. It also reiterates its request for the State party to raise awareness among women of their rights under the Convention and the communications and inquiry procedures provided by its Optional Protocol.

National machinery for the advancement of women

15. The Committee notes with concern that the National Council on Gender Policy, an interagency advisory and coordinating body composed of the heads of central government agencies, local executive and administrative authorities, National Assembly deputies and representatives of the Supreme Court and public and international organizations, was inactive between 2005 and 2008 and that the national machinery for the advancement of

women remains weak, in the absence of a specialized body for the promotion of women's rights and gender equality. The Committee is also concerned about the absence of an independent national human rights institution in the State party.

16. The Committee, recalling its general recommendations Nos. 6 and the guidance provided in the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular regarding the necessary conditions for the effective functioning of national mechanisms, recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen the capacity and financial and human resources of the National Council on Gender Policy, as well as of the Department of Population, Gender and Family Policy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, to formulate, implement, provide advice on and coordinate and oversee the preparation and implementation of legislation and policy measures in the field of gender equality;

(b) Give priority attention to women's rights and non-discrimination and to the enjoyment of gender equality, including by taking into account the Committee's recommendations in the present concluding observations in the finalization of the fourth national action plan on gender equality, accelerating its adoption and financing its implementation from the national budget; and

(c) Consider establishing an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993, Annex), a women's ombudsman or another specialized body with authority to consider, issue opinions and make recommendations on complaints submitted by women alleging violations of their human rights.

Stereotypes and discriminatory practices

17. The Committee reiterates its concern about the persistence of stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, which over-emphasize the traditional roles of women as mothers and spouses, undermine women's social status, and hamper their equal participation in political and economic life. It also notes with concern reports that the media convey increasingly sexualized and commercialized images of women.

18. The Committee calls on the State party to:

(a) Further strengthen its efforts to put in place a comprehensive policy with proactive and sustained measures, targeted at women and men, girls and boys, to overcome stereotypical attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, in particular in areas where women are in the most disadvantaged position; and

(b) Intensify its cooperation with civil society and women's organizations, Parliamentarians, education professionals, the private sector and the media, in order to disseminate targeted information to the general public and to specific stakeholders such as decision-makers, employers, journalists, disadvantaged groups of women, and the youth and to develop a more comprehensive strategy across all sectors to eliminate gender stereotypes, including images of women focusing excessively on maternal attributes, to promote images of economically and socially active women and of the equal responsibilities of women and men in the private and public spheres.

Violence against women

19. While noting the State party's efforts to sensitize the police and law enforcement officers on violence against women, the Committee reiterates its grave concern about the persistence of such violence, in particular domestic and sexual violence; its underreporting;

the high number of women killed as a result of domestic violence; the lack of prosecution of violence within the family; the fact that rape is subject to private rather than ex officio prosecution; the absence of separate criminal law provisions on domestic violence and marital rape; and the lack of shelters for victims of domestic violence.

20. In accordance with its general recommendation No. 19 (1992) on violence against women and the recommendations contained in its previous concluding observations, the Committee urges the State party to:

- (a) Intensify its efforts to prevent and prosecute acts of domestic and sexual violence against women and impose appropriate penalties commensurate with the gravity of the crime on perpetrators rather than administrative fines which may have an adverse impact on the financial situation of victims themselves;**
- (b) Expedite the adoption of the draft Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence, including specific rights for victims to assistance, protection and compensation;**
- (c) Amend its Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code in order to specifically criminalize domestic violence and marital rape, introduce ex officio prosecution for rape, and ensure that the definition of rape covers any non-consensual sexual act;**
- (d) Provide mandatory training to judges, prosecutors and the police on the strict application of legal provisions dealing with violence against women and train police officers, on standardized procedures to deal with women victims of violence;**
- (e) Encourage women to report incidents of domestic and sexual violence, by de-stigmatizing victims and raising awareness about the criminal nature of such acts;**
- (f) Provide adequate assistance and protection to women victims of violence, by strengthening the capacity of crisis rooms in territorial centres for social assistance, increasing the number of State-run shelters for battered women and girls, enhancing cooperation with and funding for NGOs providing shelter and rehabilitation to victims, and reinforcing rehabilitation programmes for alcoholics; and**
- (g) Collect statistical data on domestic and sexual violence disaggregated by sex, age and relationship between the victim and perpetrator.**

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

21. While noting that the State party gives high priority to combating trafficking in human beings, in particular women and children, the Committee remains concerned about the reported lack of preventive measures to address the root causes of trafficking, including its close link to prostitution and sexual exploitation of women and girls, the lack of assistance, rehabilitation, protection and temporary shelters, especially for victims of trafficking who are unable or unwilling to cooperate with the prosecution authorities, and the lack of funding for and cooperation with NGOs providing assistance and temporary shelter to victims of trafficking.

22. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Expedite its efforts with a view to adopting the draft Law on Countering Human Trafficking;**
- (b) Take preventive measures that address the root causes of trafficking in women and girls, in particular its close link to prostitution, sexual exploitation and domestic violence, including through social rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and inform the Committee thereof in its next report;**

- (c) **Provide adequate assistance and protection to all victims of human trafficking, as well as temporary residence permits to victims from third countries, irrespective of their capacity or willingness to cooperate in the legal proceedings against traffickers;**
- (d) **Increase the number of State-run temporary shelters for victims of trafficking and enhance the responsiveness of territorial centres to their needs; and**
- (e) **Strengthen its cooperation with and funding for NGOs providing temporary shelter and rehabilitation and reintegration services to victims of trafficking.**

Participation in political and public life

23. While acknowledging the further increase in the representation of women in the National Assembly and in local government councils, the Committee reiterates its concern that women continue to be under-represented in senior positions in the government, the judiciary and the diplomatic service. In this regard, the Committee notes that only one out of 24 Ministers of the current Government is a woman, and that there are no women among the regional governors. It expresses concern that systematic barriers, such as lack of time and money, biased attitudes towards female politicians, lack of media representation and exclusion from male political networks, prevent women from equal participation in political life. The Committee also notes with concern reports that no independent or opposition women candidates were elected to the House of Representatives in 2008 and that gender equality issues were poorly addressed in the electoral platforms of women candidates.

24. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) **Adopt temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, such as statutory electoral quota for the number of women candidates nominated by political parties, labour collectives and initiative groups and a gender parity system for political appointments, with a view to ensuring the equal representation of women and men in elected and appointed political bodies, including in decision-making positions;**
- (b) **Provide training on gender equality to politicians, journalists and decision-makers, especially men, to enhance the understanding that full, equal, free and democratic participation of women and men in political and public life is a requirement for the full implementation of the Convention; and**
- (c) **Create an enabling environment for free democratic competition ensuring equal conditions for all women and men standing for election, including independent women candidates and those belonging to opposition parties.**

25. The Committee is gravely concerned about the mass arrests of protestors, including many women, during demonstrations following the Presidential elections in December 2010, and about reports concerning inhuman and degrading treatment of women activists during detention. It is particularly concerned about the situation of Irina Khalip, Natalia Radzina, both journalists of independent media outlets, and Anastasia Palazhanko, deputy chairperson of the youth organization "Young Front", who are detained at the KGB pre-trial detention centre in Minsk on charges of organizing riots (article 293 of the Criminal Code), reportedly without confidential access to a lawyer and adequate medical treatment.

26. The Committee urges the State party to:

- (a) **Ensure that complaints submitted by women about arbitrary arrests and detention, as well as cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, in connection with the Presidential elections on 19 December 2010 are promptly and effectively investigated, that public officials responsible for such acts are prosecuted and adequately punished, and that the victims obtain adequate compensation for any violations of their rights;**

(b) Ensure that Irina Khalip, Natalia Radzina and Anastasia Polazhanko have access to an independent medical doctor; have adequate time and facilities to prepare their defence and to communicate privately with counsel of their own choosing; and that they are tried within a reasonable time in a fair and public trial by an independent and impartial tribunal, in accordance with international human rights standards, or released; and

(c) Refrain from interfering with Irina Khalip's right to privacy and family, by ensuring that the custody for her three-year old son remains with the child's grandparents pending her or her husband's release and that she may have regular contact with her son and other family members during her deprivation of liberty.

27. The Committee is concerned that the ban on the activities of unregistered public associations (Part 2, Article 7 of the Law on Public Associations), the criminalization of participation in such activities (Articles 193 and 193.1 of the Criminal Code) and excessive registration procedures, have reportedly significantly hampered the work and reduced the number of independent women's NGOs in the State party. The Committee is particularly concerned that the only women's party "Nadzeja" was liquidated by a Supreme Court ruling in October 2007 for lack of legal address and other formal requirements.

28. The Committee calls on the State party to:

(a) De-criminalize participation in activities of unregistered public associations, including women's associations;

(b) Review and amend registration procedures for public associations, including women's associations, in particular by removing the requirement of legal address, as recommended by the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association; and

(c) Create an enabling environment and ensure adequate funding opportunities for women's associations, including those advocating for gender equality and promoting a women's human rights agenda.

Education

29. While noting women's high level of education, the Committee remains concerned that women and girls continue to choose traditionally female-dominated fields of education, such as social sciences and humanities, and that they are under-represented in vocational training. It is also concerned that the feminization of the education sector, where women account for 80 percent of teacher-training students, may reinforce traditional gender stereotypes about the unequal involvement of women and men in child education.

30. The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts aimed at diversifying academic and vocational choices for women and men and take further measures to encourage women and men to choose non-traditional fields of education and careers, e.g. by encouraging more men to participate in the formal education of children.

Employment

31. The Committee reiterates its concern about continuing horizontal and vertical segregation in the labour market despite women's high education levels, their concentration in the lower-paid public sector, the persistent gender wage gap forcing many women to work extra hours, women's limited involvement in business and entrepreneurship, and the lack of information on the situation of women in the private and informal sectors. The Committee notes with concern that unemployment is higher among women than men, that women are unemployed for longer periods, and that fewer women register as unemployed due to low unemployment benefits and compulsory public work. It also expresses concern

that Article 170 of the Criminal Code may not provide adequate protection from sexual harassment in the workplace, as the burden of proof is very high in criminal cases and certain discriminatory practices in the form of sexual harassment might not amount to behaviour punishable under this provision.

32. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Adopt additional policies and measures, including temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, with time-bound targets and indicators to achieve substantive equality of men and women in the labour market, promote employment of women, eliminate occupational segregation, and close the gender wage gap;**
- (b) Regularly review the wage levels in female-dominated employment sectors;**
- (c) Eliminate gender bias on the part of private employers to ensure that wage bonuses for women and men are not determined on the basis of traditional stereotypes portraying men as the breadwinner of a family;**
- (d) Strengthen its efforts to promote women's entrepreneurship through special programmes, training, loans and counselling;**
- (e) Collect sex-disaggregated data on the situation of women and men in the private and informal sectors and take effective measures to monitor and improve the working conditions of women in those sectors; and**
- (f) Consider adopting civil legislation defining, prohibiting and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace and shifting the burden of proof in favour of the victim.**

33. While noting that the State party has intensified its efforts to promote the participation of men in child-raising and other household duties, the Committee remains concerned that women continue to be burdened with a far greater share of domestic responsibilities than men, which indicates the limited impact of measures to promote the participation of fathers in those duties.

34. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Further strengthen its efforts to raise awareness about responsible fatherhood;**
- (b) Provide additional incentives to encourage men to participate more actively in child-raising and to share equally other domestic duties;**
- (c) Sensitize employers and employees on the topic of flexible work arrangements for women and men and encourage men to make use of such arrangements; and**
- (d) Consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981).**

Health

35. While noting the reduction of the abortion rate, the Committee reiterates its concern about the continuing use of abortion as the main method of birth control, the limited use of contraceptives and the growing spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, among women and girls, in particular women sex workers. It also notes with concern that education on sexual and reproductive health and rights is not included in the regular school curricula and that the quality of sexual and reproductive health services reportedly remains poor, especially in rural areas.

36. In line with its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/BLR/CO/4-6, para. 356) and its general recommendation No. 24, the Committee calls on the State party:

- (a) To raise awareness, through special counselling services and the media, about the impact of abortion on women's physical and psychological health as well as its ethical implications and its exceptional nature;
- (b) To integrate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights in the regular school curricula;
- (c) To ensure that all women, including women with disabilities, women living with HIV/AIDS and migrant and refugee women, as well as girls have free and adequate access to contraceptives and sexual and reproductive health services, including in rural areas, and to information in accessible formats; and
- (d) To integrate a gender perspective in its national HIV/AIDS policies and programmes.

37. The Committee notes with concern the increase in the cases of breast cancer, which accounts for more than 50 percent of oncological diseases of women's reproductive system, the decrease of the average age of women suffering from breast cancer from 56-60 to 42-46 years, and the high incidence of breast cancer in areas of the State party contaminated by the Chernobyl nuclear accident and among women born in 1986. It is also concerned about the limited availability of mammographic screening, in particular in rural areas.

38. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Take measures to ensure universal mammographic screening for early detection of breast cancer by procuring a sufficient number of stationary and mobile units and by training skilled radiographers, and to that end seek international assistance, if appropriate;
- (b) Provide qualified psychological assistance and rehabilitation, as well as reconstructive surgery, for women with breast cancer; and
- (c) Conduct further research on the connection between the increase of oncological diseases such as breast cancer and radiation in areas contaminated by the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

Women and poverty

39. The Committee reiterates its concern about the feminization of poverty, particularly among women with more than two children, female-headed households, women taking care of family members with disabilities or older family members, and rural and older women. It is also concerned that family and social benefits provided to women affected by poverty are too low to ensure an adequate standard of living for them and their families.

40. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Strengthen the use of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004), to improve the economic status of women affected by poverty;
- (b) Regularly review and adjust the levels of social benefits, with a view to ensuring that they provide an adequate standard of living for women and their families; and
- (c) Ensure that all income generation and poverty alleviation programmes fully benefit women, according to their needs.

Disadvantaged groups of women

41. The Committee is concerned about the lack of disaggregated data on the situation of women who typically face multiple forms of discrimination, such as older women, women

with disabilities, women belonging to minorities, including Roma women, and lesbians, and who are particularly vulnerable to violence and abuse.

42. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Collect disaggregated data on the situation of women facing multiple forms of discrimination such as older women, , women with disabilities, women belonging to minorities, including Roma women, and lesbians and include such information in its next periodic report; and

(b) Adopt pro-active measures, including temporary special measures, to eliminate any such discrimination, including in political and public life and in the areas of education, employment and health, and to protect those women from violence and abuse.

Marriage and family relations

43. The Committee notes that Presidential Decree No. 18 of 24 November 2006 authorizing the removal of children from dysfunctional families and requiring parents to reimburse the State for its child care expenditures may re-victimize women with children living in abusive partnerships. It also notes the lack of information on the economic situation of women following divorce.

44. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Apply alternative solutions to removing children from their mothers, whenever the dysfunction of a family results from the socially irresponsible behaviour of the father, and support rather than penalize women with children living in abusive relationships; and

(b) In view of the high divorce rate, undertake research on the economic consequences of divorce on both spouses, as well as on gender-based economic disparities between spouses, and include information on the outcome of such research in its next periodic report.

Amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention

45. 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, in relation to which the State party indicated its willingness to reconsider its position.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

46. 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

47. 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 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

48. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Belarus of the present concluding observations in order to make the people, including Government officials, politicians, parliamentarians and women's and human rights organizations, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality of women and the further steps that are required in that regard. The Committee recommends that dissemination should include dissemination at the local community level. The State party is encouraged to organize a series of meetings to discuss the progress achieved in the implementation of the present 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

49. 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 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Follow-up to concluding observations

50. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraph 20 and, within one year, on the steps taken to implement the recommendations in paragraph 26 above.

Preparation of the next report

51. The Committee requests the State party to ensure the wide participation of all ministries and public bodies in the preparation of its next report and, at the same time, to consult a variety of women's and human rights organizations.

52. The Committee requests the State party to respond to the 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 February 2015.

53. The Committee invites the State party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a

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 All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on 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.

common core document and treaty-specific documents, that were 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 (A/63/38, annex I) 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 common core document should not exceed 80 pages.
