

Guidelines for submission of reports by United Nations specialized agencies and other bodies

The Committee notes that article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides an opportunity for specialized agencies of the United Nations to contribute to the work of the Committee. The Committee underlines that the contributions of specialized agencies, as well as those of United Nations funds, programmes and other entities are critical in the full implementation of the Convention at the national level.

The present guidelines refer to two aspects of the work of the United Nations specialized agencies and other bodies. One relates to the country-specific information that the agencies and bodies can provide to the Committee; and the other to the work of these agencies and bodies in contributing to the implementation of the Convention.

Country-specific information and reports provided by the entities of the United Nations system to the Committee, as well as the dialogue between the Committee and representatives of those entities contribute significantly to the Committee's work of monitoring the implementation of the Convention in States parties. At its twenty-fifth session (suggestion 25/2), the Committee adopted guidelines for the reports of United Nations bodies and specialized agencies. In light of the experience gained since that session, the Committee has revised its guidelines to further clarify the content of reports it encourages the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system to submit to the Committee, as well as their format and presentation to the Committee so as to enhance cooperation between the Committee and such entities. The Committee underlines the usefulness of country-specific information from the United Nations system for its constructive dialogue with reporting States.

The Committee requests United Nations specialized agencies and other bodies to continue to contribute to the efforts of Governments and non-governmental organizations at the national levels towards implementation of the Convention, and encourages entities that so far have not, or only sporadically, contributed to the Committee's work, to increase their involvement.

In this context, it recommends that United Nations reports should contain the following information.

A. Content of information provided

The Committee underlines the importance of receiving information, wherever possible and applicable, from the country-based offices of the entities concerned and that the information provided should reflect the entity's own knowledge and expertise.

- Country-specific information on the situation of women in regard to relevant articles of the Convention and their implementation in the State party, within the scope of work of the reporting entity;

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
3 February 2006

- Country-specific information about the State party's implementation of the Convention and follow-up to the Committee's concluding comments in areas falling within the scope of work of the reporting entity.
- Information about the efforts made by the concerned United Nations agency or body to promote implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the Committee's concluding comments through its own policies and programmes. This information should indicate the manner in which the entity concerned uses the Convention and the Committee's concluding comments in its policies and programming activities.
- As applicable, information about ongoing efforts towards supporting the ratification of the Optional Protocol, and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1 of the Convention concerning the Committee's meeting time in the State party concerned, or efforts to give publicity to the procedures available under the Optional Protocol.

B. Format of information and presentation to the Committee

The Committee finds it most beneficial to be given succinct, country-specific written reports. This information should, to the extent possible, be made available already to the pre-session working group of the Committee that prepares the list of issues and questions for the country concerned. This information should be updated, as appropriate, and presented to the Committee during the closed meetings which the Committee convenes at each session with representatives of the United Nations system. The Committee underlines that during the oral presentation, only highlights of the written submission should be flagged. The focus of the oral presentation, for which only limited time is available, should be on the most critical issues that have an impact of women's enjoyment of human rights and implementation of the Convention in the State party.

The Committee recommends that the oral presentation be made by a designated representative of the United Nations specialized agency or body who is fully familiar with the situation and is equipped to respond to the questions and comments that may be raised by members of the Committee.

C. Other matters

The Committee further emphasizes that it would welcome, from time to time, to hold a dialogue and exchange of views with heads, or senior officials, of specialized agencies, funds, programmes and other entities that contribute to the implementation of the Convention.

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