

Check against delivery

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Thirty-sixth session
7 - 25 August 2006**

**Closing remarks by
Ms. Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

**Dear Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen**

We have thus completed the work of the thirty-sixth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. I wish to thank all of you for the hard work and excellent spirit of cooperation that has helped us in completing our work.

This is the first time that we met in parallel chambers. I wish to thank the members of this Committee for the productive and positive manner in which they conducted the parallel sessions, which provided us with the opportunity to start reducing the backlog of reports of States parties to the Convention awaiting consideration. We are particularly grateful to the fifteen States parties with which we held constructive dialogues in parallel chambers, namely Cape Verde, Chile, China, Czech Republic, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Georgia, Ghana, Mauritius, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Jamaica, Philippines, and Uzbekistan. One of these States parties – Cape Verde – reported to the Committee for the first time, submitting its long overdue combined initial, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth periodic report, in accordance with our incremental measures for encouraging States parties with very long overdue reports to submit these reports.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all the States parties for their reports, the responses to our lists of issues and questions, and for their willingness to hold a constructive dialogue with this Committee about the status of the implementation of and compliance with the provisions of the Convention. I wish to thank them for their positive approach to the reporting exercise in the parallel chambers.

Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen

The Committee's concluding comments will be transmitted to the fifteen States parties early next week. I strongly encourage all of them to use the concluding comments

which we have adopted as basis for concrete and comprehensive follow-up action and to publicize the Committee's concluding comments widely to the public at large.

Once again, we benefited a great deal from the contributions by non-governmental organizations and I wish to thank them and acknowledge their pivotal role in implementation of the Convention at the national level. I commend their continuing and sustained advocacy for the promotion and protection of women's human rights. The role of the United Nations system in supporting the implementation of the Convention is also critical and I urge them to support and encourage the use of the Convention as a general framework for all development efforts at the national level.

Dear colleagues,

We spent some time during this thirty- sixth session on our work under the Optional Protocol to the Convention and I am pleased to report that we adopted two substantive decisions. We also concluded our follow-up on the first substantive decision adopted in January 2005. We continued our discussions on general recommendations on migrant women as well as on article 2 of the Convention, and issued a statement on the situation of women in the Middle East. We also reviewed and evaluated the work of the parallel chambers and adopted additional measures to improve the working methods of the chambers and ensure that they continue to function effectively at our 37th session in January 2007.

The Committee also continues to strengthen its links with the Commission on the Status of Women and welcomes the invitation to contribute to the discussion on the priority themes the Commission will take up in 2007-2008. The Committee's contribution will in particular draw from the concluding comments of the Committee in regard to the chosen theme. The opportunity to enhance the links between the treaty-monitoring body and the inter-governmental body charged with the promotion of women's equality will no doubt strengthen our joint efforts at the international level for gender equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

Colleagues

Ladies and gentlemen

We are grateful to the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, Ms Rachel Mayanja, for her continued support of the work of the Committee. I am particularly grateful to the Division for the Advancement of Women for their hard work and their usual efficient back-up and support. Our thanks also go to the interpreters and Conference Services Division for their support.

Finally, I wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Chairperson of the Committee, Ms Rosario Manalo, as well as to Ms. Huguette Bokpe-Gnacadjia, Ms Salma Khan, Ms Krisztina Morvai and Ms Victoria Popescu, who are all completing their terms of office as members of the Committee. We are grateful for the immense contributions you have made to the work of this Committee. We will very much miss your input and presence at

the Committee, but we look forward to continuing our collaboration and friendship with you. I wish you a safe journey back home and look forward to seeing you, and to welcoming the new members of the Committee, in January.