

**Committee on the Elimination of  
Discrimination against Women  
Fourteenth session  
16 January – 3 February 1995  
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**Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of  
Discrimination against Women: Japan**

**Combined second and third periodic reports (Reports considered at the  
thirteenth session)**

626. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) considered the combined second and third periodic reports of Japan (CEDAW/C/JPN/12 of 9 July) at its 248th meeting, on 27 and 28 January 1994.

Introduction

627. The Committee commended the Government of Japan on the presentation of a detailed combined report, which followed the guidelines for reporting and provided information on questions left unanswered during consideration of the initial report. The Committee also noted with appreciation the extensive responses given to the questions put by the Pre-session Working Group, but expressed its concern that the information was not provided in sufficient time for the pre-session group to consider it fully. The Committee, while appreciating the richness of the report, asked the Government of Japan to bear in mind the Committee's constraints of time for considering reports, so that in future a fuller dialogue between the distinguished representatives of the Government of Japan and the Experts could take place.

Positive aspects

628. The Committee noted and commended that some consultation with non-governmental organizations having an interest in issues affecting women had occurred. It noted in particular the active interest taken by Japanese non-governmental organizations in the Convention and also noted the independent reports provided by them. The Committee considered that this interest was indicative of the level of mobilization and concern among Japanese women and the degree of consensus about the major obstacles faced by them in achieving equal status with men.

629. The Committee also commended the Government of Japan on the progress made in a short time in advancing the status of women, particularly in the increased participation of women in public and political life, and the plans of the Government to improve further that participation. The Committee also applauded the way in which the Government had encouraged the broader participation of women in education and its action in implementing a family leave scheme.

Principal subjects of concern

630. The Committee observed with concern that although Japan ranked second among the countries of the world in terms of overall resource development, according

to the United Nations, her ranking was reduced to fourteenth when the socio-economic status of Japanese women was taken into consideration. The Committee considered that this demonstrated the State's indifference to integrating women fully in the economic development process of the country.

631. The Committee also expressed its concern that although the report contained a wealth of data, it was otherwise descriptive and lacked critical analysis of the obstacles to full implementation of the Convention in Japan.

632. The Committee noted further that, despite the introduction of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, individual discrimination continues.

633. The Committee expressed its disappointment that the Japanese report contained no serious reflection on issues concerning the sexual exploitation of women from other countries in Asia and during the Second World War. It noted that Japan's commitment to the Convention required it to ensure the protection of the full human rights of all women, including foreign and immigrant women.

#### Suggestions and recommendations

634. The Committee asks that the Government of Japan engage in effective dialogue with Japanese women's organizations during the preparation of the next periodic report so that a better picture of Japanese women emerges. The legal and functional discrimination faced by Japanese women, both in the private sphere and in the workplace should be identified, as should the measures in place or planned to overcome these obstacles.

635. To enable the Committee to have a better understanding of commercial sexual exploitation or prostitution of immigrant women in Japan, more detailed information should be provided on the sex industry in Japan. The Committee requests the Government of Japan to undertake a study of the sex industry in Japan and to provide information on the findings in its next report. The Committee also encourages the Government to take specific and effective measures to address these current issues as well as war-related crimes and to inform the Committee about such measures in the next report.

636. The Government of Japan should ensure that the private sector complies with the provisions of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and report on the measures taken to address the indirect discrimination faced by women, both in terms of promotion and wages in the private sector.