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**Closing remarks
by
Ms. Rachel Mayanja
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on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women**

**at the
closing of the CEDAW 36th session
New York, 25th August 2006**

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished members of the Committee,
Ladies and gentlemen,

May I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam Chairperson, and all the members of the Committee on the successful completion of the work of the thirty-sixth session, which comes to an end today. You have dealt with a challenging and a significant volume of work. I wish to pay tribute to the commitment and hard work of all experts under the able leadership of the Chairperson and Bureau members in both chambers. Your expertise and experience have indeed resulted in a most productive session with many thoughtful discussions.

Madam Chairperson

You have held successful constructive dialogues with 15 States parties, with all the hours of work that this has entailed. Chamber A examined seven reports of States parties - namely: Cuba, Denmark, Uzbekistan, Mauritius, Philippines, Chile and Czech Republic; as did Chamber B which considered: Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, China, Jamaica, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Mexico. One States party - Cape Verde – (which reported to the Committee for the first time since it acceded to the Convention in 1980) was considered by the Committee in plenary. Your questions and interventions and the concluding comments that you have adopted on the basis of these dialogues, will provide a solid framework for enhanced implementation of the Convention in the reporting States Parties. I also extend my sincere appreciation to these States Parties for their reports, the responses to the lists of issues and questions of the Committee and for their willingness to hold a constructive dialogue with the Committee about the status of implementation of the Convention. I sincerely thank all States parties for their useful and productive participation in this exercise.

The consideration of the States parties' reports in chambers was quite unique and challenging. I am confident that the criteria that you used to guide your work were very successful, including among others, a fair geographical balance of experts between the

two chambers; seniority of experts on the Committee, and the assignment of experts who are nationals of a reporting State to the chamber that is not considering the report from that State party. You have called this session, a session for learning. Through your experience and extraordinary efforts, this session will be a model for future sessions in which you will sit in chambers.

Madam Chairperson

The high level of attendance of non-governmental organizations once again made a significant contribution to the work of the Committee and I encourage them to continue with their advocacy for the promotion and protection of women's human rights and the implementation of the Convention. I also wish to stress the important role which the United Nations system plays in supporting the implementation of the Convention and the work of the Committee.

Madam Chairperson
Distinguished members of the Committee

Allow me to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the outgoing Chairperson, Ms. Rosario Manalo, even in her absence, for her leadership and achievements over the period of her stewardship and for her heartfelt contribution to this Committee. Let me assure Ms. Manalo that she will always be remembered. My gratitude goes to other members of the Bureau, Ms. Hanna-Beate Schöpp-Schilling, Ms. Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani, and Ms. Dubravka Simonovic for their hard work and dedication. In the absence from the session of Bureau member, Ms. Silvia Pimentel, an extra heavy workload was carried by you.

May I also express my appreciation to those experts whose terms on the Committee will end on 31 December 2006? They are Ms. Huguette Bokpe-Gnacadjia, Ms. Rosario Manalo, Ms. Kristina Morvai, Ms. Victoria Popescu and Ms. Salma Khan. I wish to acknowledge the effective and substantive contributions to the Committee of these members who are leaving and sincerely thank them for their hard work over the period they dedicated to this Committee. Their contributions will always be remembered and I am sure that they will continue to advance the goals of the Convention and to influence the Committee in reaching those goals.

Also my gratitude goes to the members of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol, namely: the Chairperson, Ms. Pramila Patten, and other members of the Working Group, Mr. Cees Flinterman, Ms. Magalys Arocha Dominguez, Ms. Kristina Morvai and Ms. Anamah Tan. They have carried on the work with the dedication and pioneering spirit that began under the Working Group's first Chairperson, Ms. Hanna-Beate Schöpp-Schilling, and they are now ready to pass the baton to the next Working Group that will be constituted in January 2007.

Madam Chairperson
Distinguished members of the Committee

Allow me to comment on some of the aspects of your work at this session.

I welcome the Committee's continuing attention to enhancing its working methods in chambers. Aside from consideration of twice the number of States Parties reports as you normally do during a three-week session, and drafting concluding comments on those reports, you managed to adopt decisions on two communications on their merits. You also took action to follow-up on the fifth Inter-Committee meeting of human rights treaty bodies and the eighteenth meeting of Chairpersons of human rights treaty bodies, prepared a contribution for the Commission on the Status of Women's priority themes; continued discussion of general recommendations on migrant women and on a general recommendation on article 2 of the Convention, drafted a statement on the situation of women in Lebanon and discussed the Malbun II report. I congratulate all of you on the hard work completed at this session.

Madam Chairperson
Distinguished members of the Committee
Ladies and gentlemen

Allow me to thank the entire Committee for the good work it is doing to promote the human rights of women all over the world. I would welcome any reflections that you may have on this session, so that I can better support you in the future.

I wish to reiterate my pledge of continued support of my office and that of the Division for the Advancement of Women to the work of this Committee to deepen the understanding of the Convention's rights for the women of the world.

Madam Chairperson

May I take this opportunity to wish you and all members of the Committee a safe journey back home as well as a good rest and a belated vacation? We will look forward to seeing you once again in New York in January 2007.

Thank you Madam Chairperson.
