

15 February 2005
English
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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Thirty-second session
10-28 January 2005

Concluding comments: Gabon

1. The Committee considered the combined second, third, fourth and fifth periodic reports of Gabon (CEDAW/C/GAB/2-5) at its 669th and 670th meetings, held on 13 January 2005.

Introduction by the State party

2. Introducing the report, the representative clarified certain points relating to the consideration of the initial report, submitted in 1989. Continuing, she noted that the Ministry for the Advancement of Women dealt with women's issues across the board. In outlining the main features of the report to the Committee, she mentioned improvements as well as current problems concerning the situation of women in

launched by the Government, various associations and non-governmental organizations.

5. At the political level, the representative emphasized that there was no discrimination based on gender in respect of the participation of women in public life. She added that important posts of responsibility were held by women. In 2002, the President of the Republic had requested that each electoral list must include at least three women eligible for election. In 2003, he had required each ministerial department chief to nominate at least four women counsellors out of 10.

6. In the economic field, she recalled that the "Grand Prix of the President of the Republic for the promotion of the socio-economic activities of women" was granted on 17 April each year on the occasion of National Women's Day. She also mentioned various projects launched by the Government and the activities of the associations movement with the aim of ensuring women's economic independence and of resolving difficulties with banks.

7. With regard to education, the representative noted an improvement with respect to compulsory education of children aged 6 to 16 years. She mentioned the creation of a committee to combat AIDS in schools, the existence of a budget for

requests the State party to include in its next report statistical data and analysis, disaggregated by sex and by rural and urban areas, indicating the impact of measures and the results achieved.

27. In accordance with its general recommendation 19, the Committee urges the State party to give high priority to putting in place comprehensive measures to address all forms of violence against women and girls, recognizing that such violence is a form of discrimination against women and constitutes a violation of their human rights under the Convention. The Committee calls upon the State party to enact, as soon as possible, legislation on violence against women, including domestic violence, so as to ensure that violence against women constitutes a criminal offence, that women and girls who are victims of violence have access to immediate means of redress and protection and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished. The Committee recommends that the State party also implement educational and awareness-raising measures aimed at law enforcement officials, the judiciary,

collaboration with civil society and women's and human rights organizations and to seek effective cooperation with the media, including radio and print media. It also urges the State party to make better use of the formal education system, including revision of school curriculums and textbooks, to further these efforts.

32. The Committee expresses concern that although education is compulsory for all children aged 6 to 16 under Act No. 16/66 of 10 August 1966, the attendance rates for girls drop precipitously at higher levels of education, with 39.94 per cent in junior high school and 7.20 per cent in upper high

