

group and for the oral presentation and further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee.

12. The Committee commends the State party for its high-level delegation, which was headed by the Minister in charge of the Women's Bureau of the Office of the President of the Republic, and also included officials from the judiciary and the legislature. In this regard, the Committee notes with appreciation the efforts of the State party to work with different stakeholders on the promotion of gender equality and the implementation of the Convention. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue held between the delegation and the members of the Committee.

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18. The Committee is concerned that the State party has failed to take adequate steps to implement the recommendations in regard to several concerns raised in the Committee's previous concluding comments adopted in 1996 (A/51/38). In particular, the Committee finds that its concerns about the low participation of women in decision-making bodies and in political and public life (para. 129) and the high illiteracy and dropout rates among women (para

are prosecuted and punished and that women are effectively protected against reprisals. The Committee calls upon the State party to establish shelters and other services for victims of violence. The Committee invites the State party to intensify its efforts to increase awareness among public officials, especially law enforcement officials, the judiciary, health-care providers and social workers and to reinforce the notion that such violence is socially and morally unacceptable and constitutes discrimination against women and violates their human rights. The Committee encourages the State party to enhance collaboration and coordination with civil society organizations, in particular women's associations, to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of legislation and programmes aimed at eliminating violence against women.

35. The Committee urges the State party to address the rights, needs and concerns of rural women through the effective implementation of the Agrarian

information on the implementation of aspects of those documents relating to relevant articles of the Convention in its next periodic report.

41. The Committee commends the State party for having ratified the seven major international human rights instruments. The Committee notes that States' adherence to the seven major international human rights instruments, namely the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, enhances the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life.

42. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Paraguay of the present concluding comments in order to make the people of Paraguay, including government officials, politicians, parliamentarians and women's and human rights organizations, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de jure and de facto equality for women and the future steps required in that regard. It also requests the State party to continue to disseminate widely, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention and its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".