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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**  
**Thirty-third session**  
**5 to 22 July 2005**

**Closing comments by**  
**Ms. Rosario Manalo, Chairperson of the Committee**

Dear colleagues,

We have thus completed the work of the thirty-third session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

I would like to start by thanking the experts and especially my colleagues in the Bureau for the support extended to the Chair during this session, and for the consistent spirit of cooperation, desire to move the work of this Committee forward and make a significant contribution to the promotion of the rights of women.

As Ms. Mayanja has said, we held constructive dialogues w dial

proceedings of our Committee. I am sure that all of them returned to their home country with an even stronger commitment to advocate for women's de facto equality.

For the first time, the Committee also received information from a national human rights institution, and we look forward to welcoming representatives from such institutions in the future. While the Committee also received information from entities of the UN system, it would welcome a stronger and more consistent involvement and contribution by a larger number of such entities in the future. Many of the entities implement important work on equality issues. The Committee would therefore welcome a more active engagement of UN entities in support of the implementation of the Convention at national level, and a more visible and tangible contribution to the reporting process.

I thank Ms. Mayanja for highlighting some ~~TD(l)~~Tj 13 0 TD(v)Tj 25 0 TD(e)Tj 23 0 TD(m)Tj 38 0 T

consistently have lower levels of education, employment, health and participation in decision-making than their sisters in urban areas or who belong to predominant groups. The Committee is very much concerned with this reality and impresses on States parties the need for targeted action as the Convention must be implemented for the benefit of all women.

Dear colleagues,

I wish to note some of the other outcomes of this session. Above all, I wish to highlight the Committee's decision to request the General Assembly to grant an extension of the Committee's meeting time. Our workload is such that it simply cannot be accommodated within the time available to us. We take up the reports of 16 States per year, but a significantly larger number of States submit their reports annually, as is only to be expected with 180 States parties to the Convention. We look to the support of all Member States for the Committee's request for three annual sessions as of 2006. In addition, and as a temporary measure for 2 years, the Committee proposes to meet in parallel working groups for parts of its sessions so as to eliminate the backlog of reports awaiting consideration.

I am also very pleased with the very positive experience the Committee has had in the use of country task forces, where a group of experts takes the lead in the constructive dialogue with the State party. This approach has in particular contributed to a more focused dialogue where no important issue is omitted from consideration, but which also ensures better coordination among the experts and therefore better complementarity in the analysis and issues raised with the delegations. I look forward to a successful continuation of the use of this method of work.

The Committee was concerned about recent developments in regard to women's equality in drafting process of the Constitution in Iraq, and has issued a statement to reiterate the State party's obligations under the Convention.

Dear colleagues,

With these few highlights, may I once again express my sincere appreciation to all of you for the hard work of this three-we