

**Third Committee of the General Assembly
Sixty-first session
Agenda item 60**

Statement by

**Ms Rosario G. Manalo
Chairperson of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

9 October 2006

[Note: presented on behalf of the Chair]

extended meeting time in the biennium will allow for a significant reduction in the backlog of reports awaiting consideration. At the same time, the Committee anticipates that extended meeting time will be required in 2008 and beyond and it intends to submit another proposal to that effect to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session.

I thank States parties for submitting their reports and engaging in the constructive dialogue with the members of the Committee. I also extend the Committee's sincere appreciation to non-governmental organizations – most of which were national and local organizations – that provided information to the Committee. The Committee also welcomed and appreciated the contributions from entities of the United Nations system and especially the joint reports on several reporting States presented by United Nations country teams.

In addition to its three annual sessions, the Committee held an informal meeting in Berlin in May 2006. This was the Committee's fifth informal meeting, and the second invitation of the Government of Germany. The meeting afforded the Committee an opportunity to consider its working methods, particularly in connection with the consideration of periodic reports in parallel chambers. On behalf of the Committee, I extend our sincere appreciation to the German Government for hosting the Committee and thus supporting our work on a range of critical issues.

Chairperson,

I am very pleased to report about the important progress made by the Committee in discharging its responsibilities under the Optional Protocol to the Convention. The Committee adopted views (admissibility and merits) on two communications under article 2 of the Optional Protocol and declared one communication inadmissible. Communication no. 3/2004, Ms. Dung Thi Thuy Nguyen v. the Netherlands dealt with maternity benefits. The Committee declared the communication admissible and found no violation of the Convention. Three members of the Committee appended a dissenting opinion. Communication no. 4/2004, Ms. Andrea Szijjarto v. Hungary dealt with involuntary sterilization. The Committee declared the communication admissible and found a violation of the author's rights under articles 10 (h), 12 and 16, paragraph 1 (e) of the Convention. Communication no 8/2005, Ms. Rahime Kayhan v. Turkey was declared inadmissible. The Committee also brought to a close its follow-up activities on its views on communication no. 2/2003, A.T. v. Hungary.

The Committee adopted two statements, one entitled "Towards a harmonized and integrated human rights treaty bodies system" that it brought to the attention of the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting which took place in June 2006 in Geneva. In that statement, the Committee put forward a series of steps that should be taken to enhance the overall functioning of the treaty bodies as a system. The Committee looks forward to the continuing discussion of its proposal within the framework of treaty body reform. The Committee also adopted a statement on the situation of women in the Middle East, where it reflected on the impact of the hostilities on women, and emphasized the obligations of

all parties concerned under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The Committee also made significant progress in the elaboration of a general recommendation on migrant women, where we held a first reading of the draft. Inter-sessionally, the draft will be further refined so that the Committee may be in a position to complete this work expeditiously in early 2007. I also had the honour, on behalf of the Committee, to send a letter to the President of the General Assembly on the occasion of the high-level dialogue on migration and development.

Let me now turn to Committee decisions and actions pertaining to working methods. Based on the work undertaken at the Berlin meeting, the Committee at its thirty-fifth session, adopted a series of measures, including clear, transparent and fair guidelines for determining membership in parallel chambers, assignment of office holders to chambers in a balanced manner, a strengthened and enhanced role for the country rapporteurs, coordination on issues and priorities for the constructive dialogue with reporting States parties, and effective time management and flexibility.

I wish you the best in your deliberations, and thank you.