

Closing remarks
by
Ms. Rachel Mayanja,
Assistant Secretary-General and
Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on
Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
at the
thirty-seventh session of the
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
New York, 2 February 2007

Madam Chairperson
Distinguished members of the Committee
Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to congratulate you, Madam Chairperson, and all the members of the Committee on the successful completion of the work of the thirty-seventh session. You have dealt with some challenging issues and a significant volume of work. You have once again shown your dedication and commitment to discharge effectively all the responsibilities entrusted to you under the Convention and the Optional Protocol. I wish to pay tribute to the commitment and hard work of all experts in both Chambers under the leadership of you, Madam Chairperson, and the other members of the Bureau. 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 this has entailed. Chamber A examined the reports of seven States parties, namely: Azerbaijan, Greece, India, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Peru and Suriname; as did Chamber B which considered the reports of: Austria, Colombia, Maldives, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Poland and Viet-Nam. One State party, Tajikistan, reported to the Committee for the first time since it acceded to the Convention on 26 October 1993, and the Committee considered the combined initial, second and third periodic report in plenary.

During the constructive dialogue with States parties, experts have probed carefully and conscientiously to obtain a very precise picture of the status of the implementation of the Convention in those States parties. Your many diverse and sometimes difficult questions not only reflected your detailed knowledge but also provided a framework for better implementation of the Convention at the domestic

level in the reporting States. Your concluding comments now provide a solid basis for further work by all States parties to enhance women's enjoyment of their human rights.

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 members of the Committee about the status of the implementation of the Convention. I sincerely thank these States parties for their productive participation in this exercise.

The attendance of a large number 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 and the use of its Optional Protocol.

In accordance with your established practice, you held a discussion with the United Nations entities and specialized agencies. These entities contributed valuable information to the reporting process, and we anticipate that the Committee's concluding comments will provide further opportunity to support implementation of the Convention at the national level.

Madam Chairperson
Distinguished members of the Committee

I welcome the Committee's continuing attention to enhancing its work methods in chambers under article 18 of the Convention. This was the second time the Committee met in chambers. I understand that your evaluation of this experience has been very positive, while you have also identified areas for continuing improvement. You also discussed aspects of your working methods in an effort to keep them as efficient and effective as possible, including in the framework of on the harmonization of working methods of treaty bodies.

You met with the High Commissioner for Human Rights for an exchange of views pertaining to the Secretary-General's decision to transfer responsibility for servicing of the Committee to her Office. I was privileged to discuss with you, and receive your very useful comments, on the question of the reform of the gender architecture in the United Nations.

You also had a very fruitful and informative exchange of views with Professor Alain Pellet, Special Rapporteur of the International Law Commission to discuss matters relating to reservations.

Madam Chairperson

I am grateful to you and the entire Committee for the good work you are doing to promote the human rights of women all over the world. I also take this opportunity to congratulate you, Madam Chairperson for your leadership and the excellent manner in which you have conducted this session of the Committee. I would welcome any reflections that you may have on this session, so that we can better support you in the future work of the Committee. Let me also reiterate the commitment of my office and the Division for the Advancement of Women for the Committee as it strives to enhance the impact of the Convention in the promotion and protection of the rights of women world-wide.

Some of you will stay on for a few more days: the five members of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol will continue to deliberate on the registered cases, while the four members of the Pre-session Working Group for the thirty-ninth session, in August 2007, will prepare the lists of issues and questions for the States parties whose reports will be examined at that time. I wish you well in your deliberations.

I wish you Madam Chairperson, and all members of the Committee a safe journey back home as well as some well-deserved rest, and we look forward to seeing you once again back in New York in May 2007.

Thank you Madam Chairperson.
