



## Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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### Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Forty-fourth session  
20 July-7 August 2009

### Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

#### Timor-Leste

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Timor-Leste (CEDAW/C/TLS/1) at its 896th and 897th meetings, on 30 July (see CEDAW/C/SR.896 and 897). The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/TLS/Q/1 and the responses of the Government of Timor-Leste are contained in CEDAW/C/TLS/Q/1/Add.1.

#### Introduction

2. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its initial report, which followed the Committee's harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties. The initial report was therefore very informative and provided a candid picture of the situation of women in Timor-Leste. The Committee also expresses its appreciation to the State party for the written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-session working group.

3. The Committee commends the State party for the high-level delegation headed by the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality, which included a balanced number of women and men representatives from ministries responsible for the implementation of measures in the areas covered by the Convention. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for the oral presentation by the delegation, which provided an overview of recent advances and challenges to the achievement of gender equality in Timor-Leste, and for the clarification to the questions posed by the Committee during the frank and constructive dialogue. It regrets that some questions raised by the Committee were not adequately addressed.

#### Positive aspects

4. Fully aware of the vast challenges confronting a newly independent State, the Committee commends the Government for its expressed commitment and strong

political will as reflected in the Dili Declaration, and for the policies and measures taken to eliminate discrimination against women in all fields covered by the Convention.

5. The Committee notes with appreciation that the initial report was prepared with technical assistance and in a participatory process which involved Government bodies, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. It also notes with satisfaction the regular cooperation and partnership with non-governmental organizations in efforts aimed at implementing the Convention.

6. The Committee commends the State party for having acceded to the Convention without reservations, as well as to the Optional Protocol, in April 2003.

7. The Committee congratulates the State party for having applied the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the Convention and submitted for the first time to the Committee a comprehensive common core document together with a Convention-specific document.

8. The Committee congratulates the State party for the establishment in 2008 of the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality, as well as for the adoption of Organic Law No. 16/2008, which broadened the mandate of the Secretary of State.

9. The Committee commends the State party for the creation of an Office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice, commonly referred to as the "Provedor".

10. The Committee notes with appreciation that the State party ratified seven major international human rights instruments in the period 2003-2004.

#### **Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

**11. The Committee recalls the State party's obligation to implement, systematically and continuously, all the provisions of the Convention, and views the concerns and recommendations identified in the present concluding observations as requiring the State party's priority attention between now and the submission of its next periodic report. Consequently, the Committee urges the State party to focus on those areas in its implementation activities and to report on actions taken and results achieved in its next periodic report. It calls upon the State party to submit the present concluding observations to all relevant ministries, to the Parliament and to the judiciary, so as to ensure their full implementation.**

#### **Parliament**

**12. While reaffirming that the Government has the primary responsibility, and is accountable in particular, for the full implementation of the State party's obligations under the Convention, the Committee, stressing that the Convention is binding on all branches of Government, invites the State party to encourage its national Parliament, in line with its procedures, where appropriate, to take the necessary steps with regard to the implementation of the present concluding observations and the Government's next reporting process under the Convention.**

13. While welcoming the ongoing efforts to address the needs of women in the post-conflict period, the Committee is concerned that the promotion of women's

human rights and gender equality has not been considered as a priority, in particular in efforts to address the consequences of the conflict and in the peacebuilding and reconstruction processes. It is also concerned about the small number of women in leadership positions in areas connected with the transition process.

**14. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the promotion and protection of women's human rights and gender equality are central goals of all aspects of the transition process and to raise the legislature's awareness of those important goals. It further urges the State party to devote serious attention to the specific needs of women in the post-conflict period and ensure women's equal participation in decision-making, in conformity with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. The Committee recommends that the State party put in place an action plan for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), taking into account paragraph 1 of article 4, and articles 7 and 8 of the Convention.**

#### **Legal status of the Convention and the Optional Protocol**

15. While noting with satisfaction that international treaties that are ratified become part of domestic law in accordance with article 9 of the Constitution, the Committee is concerned that the status of international human rights instruments, including the Convention, vis-à-vis national law, is not clear.

**16. The Committee recommends that the State party clarify the status of international conventions within its domestic legal framework, ensuring the priority of international instruments, including the Convention, over national legislation, and that it ensure conformity of such legislation with international instruments.**

#### **Non-discrimination and equality**

17. The Committee is concerned that, although article 16 of the Constitution affirms the principle of non-discrimination, neither the Constitution nor other laws include a definition of discrimination against women in accordance with article 1 of the Convention, which prohibits direct and indirect discrimination. The Committee is also concerned that, although article 6 (j) of the Constitution declares the State responsible for promoting and ensuring "effective equality of opportunities between women and men", the principle of "equality of opportunities" does not amount to the notion of "equality" in its fullest sense, in accordance with article 2 (a) of the Convention.

**18. The Committee calls on the State party to include in the Constitution or other appropriate legislation a definition of discrimination against women that encompasses both direct and indirect discrimination in line with article 1 of the Convention. The Committee further calls on the State party to incorporate the principle of equality between women and men in the Constitution or in other appropriate law in line with article 2 (a) of the Convention. It calls upon the State party to enact and implement a comprehensive law on gender equality that is binding on both the public and private sectors and make women aware of their rights under such legislation. The Committee also recommends that the State party establish clear procedures for filing complaints on discrimination against women, provide adequate sanctions for such discrimination and ensure that effective remedies are available to women whose rights have been violated.**

**Visibility of the Convention and the Optional Protocol**

19. While welcoming the State party's accession to both the Convention and its Optional Protocol in April 2003, the Committee is concerned about the general lack of awareness of the Convention and the Optional Protocol in Timor-Leste, in particular among the judiciary and other law-enforcement officials. It is concerned that women themselves are not aware of their rights under the Convention or of the complaints procedure under the Optional Protocol, and thus lack the capacity to claim their rights. The Committee also notes with concern that the State party was not able to provide information on cases where the provisions of the Convention had been invoked in courts.

**20. The Committee urges the State party to take the necessary steps to ensure the adequate dissemination of the Convention, the Optional Protocol and the Committee's general recommendations among all stakeholders, including Government ministries, parliamentarians, the judiciary and law-enforcement officers. The Committee further urges the State party to translate the Convention and its Optional Protocol into local languages and to disseminate them widely to the general public, non-governmental organizations, political parties and community leaders so as to create awareness of women's human rights.**

**Access to justice**

21. The Committee is concerned that, while women's access to justice is provided for by legislation, their ability in practice to exercise that right and to bring cases of discrimination before courts is limited by such factors as illiteracy, language barriers, practical difficulties in accessing courts, the persistence of traditional justice systems, legal costs, lack of information about their rights and lack of assistance in pursuing their rights.

**22. The Committee requests the State party to take all appropriate measures to remove impediments women may face in gaining access to justice, and to ensure that the judiciary is familiar with the Convention and the State party's obligations. It urges the State party to provide legal aid services, implement legal literacy programmes and disseminate knowledge of ways to utilize available legal remedies against discrimination, as well as to monitor the results of such efforts. The Committee encourages the State party to seek assistance from the international community in order to implement measures that, in practice, will strengthen women's access to justice.**

**National machinery**

23. While welcoming the establishment of the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality under the Cabinet of the Prime Minister and gender focal points at the ministerial and regional levels, the Committee is concerned about the lack of adequate financial and human resources to ensure effective functioning of these newly created government offices. While welcoming the comprehensive information provided with regard to the current strategic plan, for 2006-2011, the Committee regrets the lack of information provided with regard to the objectives and areas of intervention of the strategic plan for 2010-2015. The Committee also regrets the lack of information provided on responses developed or envisaged to overcome

difficulties and obstacles in achieving more sustained results through the use of gender mainstreaming.

**24. The Committee recommends that the State party further strengthen the national machinery for the advancement of women and provide it with the authority, decision-making power and human and financial resources that are necessary for it to work effectively for the promotion of gender equality and the enjoyment by women of their rights. This should include capacity for effective coordination and cooperation among the various gender equality and human rights mechanisms and with civil society, as well as the setting up of a permanent interdepartmental structure with high-level representatives with decision-making powers from all relevant sectors and levels of policymaking in order to ensure the effective functioning of gender mainstreaming strategy. The Committee further recommends that monitoring mechanisms be put in place to regularly assess progress of the State party's strategic plan for 2010-2015 towards the achievement of the established goals.**

#### **Temporary special measures**

25. The Committee notes the State party's insufficient understanding of the purpose of and need for temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention. The Committee is concerned about the absence of women in the judiciary and the limited participation of women in public administration, especially at decision-making levels.

**26. The Committee recommends that the State party use temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, as part of a necessary strategy to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality for women, especially in the judiciary and the civil service, including the foreign service. It requests that the Government include information on the use of such temporary special measures, in relation to the various provisions of the Convention, and the impact of such measures, in its next periodic report.**

#### **Stereotypes and cultural practices**

27. The Committee is concerned about the prevalence in the State party of a patriarchal ideology with firmly entrenched stereotypes and the persistence of deep-rooted adverse cultural norms, customs and traditions, including forced and early marriage, polygamy and bride price or dowry (barlake), that discriminate against women, result in limitations to women's educational and employment opportunities and constitute serious obstacles to women's enjoyment of their human rights.

**28. The Committee urges the State party to view culture as a dynamic dimension of the country's life and social fabric, subject to many influences over time and therefore subject to change. It urges the State party to be more proactive and to put in place without delay a comprehensive strategy, including clear goals and timetables, to modify or eliminate negative cultural practices and stereotypes that are harmful to and discriminate against women, and to promote women's full enjoyment of their human rights, in conformity with articles 2 (f) and 5 (a) of the Convention. Such measures should include awareness-raising and educational campaigns addressing women and men, girls and boys, religious and community leaders, parents, teachers and officials. It**

**further urges the State party to undertake these efforts in collaboration with civil society organizations, women's groups and community and religious leaders. The Committee also encourages the State party to effectively use innovative measures to strengthen understanding of the equality of women and men and to work with the media to enhance a positive and non-stereotypical portrayal of women and, in particular, to develop outreach programmes to connect with rural women.**

#### **Violence against women**

29. While noting with appreciation the enactment in March 2009 of the Penal Code, which criminalizes most sexual crimes, treats such crimes as a violation of women's rights to bodily security and integrity and ensures that criminal proceedings do not depend on a formal complaint from the victim, the Committee regrets that the delegation was unable to respond to the Committee's question regarding the criminalization of marital rape under the new Penal Code and regrets that the enactment of the draft Law on Domestic Violence has been severely delayed. The Committee is concerned at the prevalence of various forms of violence against women, in particular sexual violence and domestic violence, and the lack of information on the extent of the phenomenon. It is further concerned that cases of violence against women are resolved through traditional methods, including mediation.

**30. The Committee requests the State party to ensure that marital rape is criminalized. The Committee urges the State party to speedily enact the Law on Domestic Violence and to make it widely known to public officials and society at large and to monitor its effectiveness. It further urges the State party to develop a comprehensive national action plan on domestic violence and calls upon the State party to ensure that all women who are victims of domestic violence, including rural women, have access to immediate means of redress and protection, including protection orders, legal aid and access to a sufficient number of safe and adequately funded shelters in all districts. The Committee invites the State party to undertake awareness-raising measures aimed at the public at large to make violence against women socially and morally unacceptable. It requests the State party to undertake the systematic collection of sex-disaggregated data on all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence, as well as research into the extent and root causes of such violence, and to provide such information in its next report. The Committee recommends that cases of violence against women be dealt with through the formal penal system.**

#### **Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution**

31. While welcoming the enactment of the Immigration and Asylum Act of 2003 and of the Penal Code, which criminalizes trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation, the Committee is concerned about the persistence of trafficking and exploitation of prostitution in the country and the limited effectiveness of measures to ensure the legislation's practical implementation. The Committee is further concerned about the lack of information on the extent of prostitution in Timor-Leste.

**32. The Committee requests the State party to accelerate efforts aimed at the effective implementation and full enforcement of its anti-trafficking legislation.**

These should include, in particular, the effective prosecution and punishment of traffickers. It also recommends that the State party establish specialized support services for women victims, as well as undertake prevention efforts, including by addressing the root causes of trafficking and improving the economic situation of women so as to eliminate their vulnerability to exploitation and traffickers. The Committee recommends that the State party ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. It urges the State party to speedily enact the law regarding witness protection in Timor-Leste and to include in its next report sex-disaggregated data and information on the exploitation of prostitution.

#### **Political participation and participation in public life**

33. While appreciating the increased numbers of women in the national Parliament, the Committee is concerned that Law No. 6/2008, which introduced the requirement that every fourth candidate standing for election to the national Parliament be female, remains discriminatory against women. The Committee is concerned about the continued underrepresentation of women in public and political life and in decision-making positions, particularly at the local level. The Committee is further concerned about information suggesting that women standing for election fear reprisal from their communities or other forms of political intimidation and violence.

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to increase the participation of women in decision-making posts, in particular at the local level and in senior managerial positions in the private sector, including through the use of temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25. The Committee encourages the State party to consider a review of Law No. 6/2008 to increase the number of women required. It recommends that the State party establish concrete goals and timetables and implement awareness-raising programmes, including with community leaders, to encourage women to participate in public life. It calls on the State party to highlight the importance to society as a whole of women's full and equal participation in leadership positions at all levels of decision-making for the development of the country. The Committee further urges the State party to create and ensure a secure environment in which female candidates do not fear intimidation or reprisal.**

#### **Education**

35. While appreciating the State party's efforts to reduce female illiteracy, in particular among young girls, and achieve parity between boys and girls in primary education, the Committee is concerned at the low enrolment rate of girls in secondary and higher education, as well as at girls' high dropout rates. The Committee is further concerned that traditional attitudes, early pregnancies and early marriages are among the causes of girls dropping out and that pregnant girls who leave school as a result of the measure of suspension encounter difficulties in resuming their studies. The Committee is alarmed at the high number of girls who suffer sexual abuse and harassment by teachers, as well as the high number of girls who suffer sexual harassment and violence while on their way to school. It is also

concerned that corporal punishment is accepted in both school and home settings and constitutes a form of violence against children, including the girl child.

36. **The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to ensure de facto equal access of girls and young women to all levels of education, overcome traditional attitudes hampering women and girls in their full enjoyment of their right to education, retain girls in schools and implement re-entry policies enabling young women to return to school after pregnancy. The Committee further urges the State party to take measures to increase the enrolment of girls at all levels and recommends the introduction of temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and its general recommendation No. 25. The Committee recommends that the State party encourage the collaboration of parents in the implementation of such measures. The Committee encourages the State party to strengthen its efforts to eradicate illiteracy, particularly among rural women, by conducting literacy programmes in local languages as well as Portuguese, involving parents in these measures. The Committee calls upon the State party to provide safe transportation to and from schools, as well as safe educational environments free from discrimination and violence. It calls on the State party to strengthen awareness-raising and training of school officials and students, sensitization of children through the media and the establishment of reporting and accountability mechanisms to ensure that perpetrators of sexual abuse and harassment are prosecuted. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that those responsible for the harassment or abuse of girls are prosecuted and punished in accordance with the severity of these crimes, that such abuse is viewed as a human rights violation and that girls are provided with support so that they can report such incidents. The Committee also urges the State party to take measures to promote the creation of a positive environment that will prevent such abuse from arising, including by encouraging families not to accept the settlement of such cases through the marriage of the girl to the perpetrator. The Committee recommends that the State party explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including through awareness-raising campaigns aimed at families, the school system and other educational settings.**

#### **Health**

37. While the Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State party with regard to reproductive health, it notes with concern that the maternal and infant mortality rates in Timor-Leste are extremely high. It is also concerned about women's lack of access, particularly in rural areas, to adequate prenatal and post-natal care and family-planning information. The Committee is further concerned that existing sex-education programmes are insufficient and may not give enough attention to the importance of the use of contraceptives, the prevention of early pregnancy and the control of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. The Committee is also concerned that many women, in particular in rural areas, give birth at home, and that the practice of illegal and unsafe abortions increases the high rate of maternal mortality. The Committee is concerned that abortion is a punishable offence under the newly adopted Penal Code, particularly as this may lead more women to seek unsafe, illegal abortions, with consequent risk to their life and



health. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of information and statistical data on women's mental health.

**38. The Committee recommends that the State party step up its efforts to reduce the high rate of maternal and infant mortality. It suggests that the State party assess the root causes of maternal mortality and set targets and benchmarks with a time frame for its reduction. It urges the State party to make every effort to raise the awareness of, and increase women's access to, health-care facilities and medical assistance by trained personnel, especially in rural areas and in the area of post-natal care in particular. The Committee further recommends that the State party implement programmes and policies aimed at providing effective access to affordable contraceptives and family-planning services so that women and men can make informed choices about the number and spacing of their children. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that sex-education programmes are widely promoted and targeted at girls and boys and include special attention to the prevention of early pregnancies. The Committee further calls upon the State party to review the legislation relating to abortion with a view to removing the punitive provisions imposed on women who undergo abortion, in accordance with the Committee's general recommendation No. 24 on women and health and the Beijing Platform for Action. The Committee recommends that the State party put in place a system of data collection to strengthen the knowledge base for effective policy development and implementation on all aspects of women's health, including the monitoring of concrete impact.**

#### **Employment**

39. While welcoming the adoption of the Labour Code, as well as other labour-related legislation which ensures equality between men and women, including equal pay for work of equal value and paid maternity leave, the Committee expresses concern about the de facto discrimination faced by women in employment, as reflected in the hiring process, the extremely wide wage gap and occupational segregation. It is concerned about the legal provisions governing the public and private sectors, especially on the issue of maternity benefits, and about information that many women do not receive remuneration or lose their former positions upon return from maternity leave. The Committee is also concerned at the high unemployment rate, the lack of secure employment for women and their concentration in the informal sector in a narrow range of activities, in particular agriculture, associated with low and unstable earnings and excluded from formal social protection programmes.

**40. The Committee recommends the adoption of measures to guarantee the implementation of all the provisions of article 11 of the Convention and encourages the State party to ratify the relevant International Labour Organization conventions, in particular Convention No. 111 on non-discrimination in employment and No. 100 on equal remuneration. The Committee urges the State party to establish effective mechanisms to ensure and monitor compliance with existing legislation, in particular with regard to maternity leave and other associated benefits. The Committee further recommends the adoption of a gender-sensitive employment policy with respect to women in the informal sectors of the economy. It recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the conditions of women workers in the**

**informal sector, in particular in agriculture, with a view to ensuring their access to social benefits. The Committee further urges the State party to establish an effective monitoring and regulatory mechanism on employment issues and practices in the private sector.**

#### **Economic empowerment of women**

41. While noting with satisfaction the State party's efforts to develop strategies for poverty reduction, as well as to promote women's autonomy through the promotion of income-generating activities and access to microcredit, the Committee is concerned at the widespread poverty among women, in particular women living in mountainous and highland areas, women heads of household, widows and older women. The Committee is especially concerned about the situation of rural women, most of whom are poor and work in agriculture in precarious living conditions and with reduced access to justice, health care, education, economic opportunities and community services.

42. **The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the promotion of gender equality is an explicit component of its national and local development plans and programmes, in particular those aimed at poverty reduction and sustainable development. The Committee also urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of women heads of household, widows and older women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have full access to credit facilities. The Committee further urges the State party to take proactive measures to ensure that rural women have access to justice, health services, education, clean water, electricity, land and income-generating projects, and are able to enjoy all other rights fully. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women with respect to the ownership and inheritance of land. It recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts at designing and implementing gender-sensitive rural development strategies and programmes, ensuring the full participation of rural women in their formulation and implementation.**

#### **Women returnees**

43. The Committee expresses concern about the precarious living conditions of women returnees who have been displaced by violence and conflict and have been reintegrated into their homes. It is concerned in particular that women returnees who have been victims of sexual and other forms of violence do not have immediate means of redress.

44. **The Committee requests the State party to pay particular attention to the needs of women returnees through the adoption of a national policy in line with Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and the formulation and implementation of gender-sensitive plans and programmes for social reintegration, capacity-building and the training of women returnees. The Committee requests the State party to ensure that women returnees who have been victims of violence, including sexual violence, have access to immediate means of redress.**

### **Family relations**

45. While welcoming the efforts of the State party to draft a national Civil Code and the statement made during the interactive dialogue confirming that the draft Civil Code is ready for submission to the Parliament, the Committee is concerned that the draft Civil Code contains discriminatory provisions in relation to marriage and family relations. In particular, the Committee is concerned that the minimum legal age for marriage currently applied is 15 years for women and 18 years for men and that, further, married women are discriminated against in relation to their choice of residence and the waiting period before they can remarry after divorce. It is further concerned about the practice of forced marriages, in particular of girls. It is also concerned about the lack of clarity with respect to women's ownership and inheritance of land as well as women's legal capacity.

**46. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that the draft Civil Code addresses all discrimination against women in all areas covered by articles 15 and 16 of the Convention, in particular with respect to inheritance and ownership rights, rights to property on divorce and legal capacity, and to give high priority to its speedy adoption. It urges the State party to raise the minimum age for marriage in the draft Civil Code to 18 years. It further urges the State party to take all necessary measures to eliminate forced marriages, to ensure that women enjoy a legal capacity identical to that of men, to equate women's inheritance and ownership rights to that of men and to ensure women's equal rights to property on divorce. The Committee further calls upon the State party to take necessary steps to ensure that once adopted, the Civil Code is made widely known to the public, the judiciary and administrative authorities.**

### **Data collection and analysis**

47. The Committee welcomes the statistical information provided in the report of the State party but regrets that the statistical information on the situation of women in all areas covered by the Convention was insufficient. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of information on the impact of measures taken and on results achieved in various areas of the Convention.

**48. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its system of data collection, including the use of measurable indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and progress towards women's de facto equality, and to allocate sufficient budgetary resources for that purpose. It invites the State party, if necessary, to seek international assistance for the development of such data-collection and analysis efforts. The Committee also requests the State party to include in its next report statistical data and analysis, disaggregated by sex, age and by rural and urban areas, indicating the impact of policy and programmatic measures and the results achieved.**

### **Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention**

49. The Committee encourages the State party to accept, as soon as possible, the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention concerning the meeting time of the Committee.

**Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action**

50. The Committee urges the State party to continue to utilize, in implementing its obligations under the Convention, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, which reinforce the provisions of the Convention, and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

**Millennium Development Goals**

51. The Committee emphasizes that full and effective implementation of the Convention is indispensable for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It calls for the integration of a gender perspective and explicit reflection of the provisions of the Convention in all efforts aimed at the achievement of the Goals and requests the State party to include information thereon in its next periodic report.

**Ratification of other treaties**

52. The Committee notes that States' adherence to the nine major international human rights instruments<sup>1</sup> would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the Government of Timor-Leste to consider ratifying the instruments to which it is not yet a party, namely, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Dissemination of concluding observations**

53. The Committee requests the wide dissemination in Timor-Leste of the present concluding observations in order to make the people, 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 of women and the further steps that are required in that regard. The Committee requests the State party to strengthen the dissemination, in particular to women's and human rights organizations, of the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the Committee's general recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and 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".

**Technical assistance**

54. The Committee recommends that the State party avail itself of technical and financial assistance in the development and implementation of a

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<sup>1</sup> 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, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

comprehensive programme aimed at the implementation of the recommendations set out above as well as the Convention as a whole. The Committee expresses its willingness to continue the dialogue with the State party, including through a country visit by Committee members to provide further guidance on the implementation of the recommendations and the State party's obligations under the Convention. The Committee also calls upon the State party to strengthen further its cooperation with specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Statistics Division and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

#### **Follow-up to concluding observations**

55. The Committee requests the State party to provide, within two years, detailed written information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 36 and 38 above.

#### **Date of next report**

56. The Committee requests the State party to respond to the concerns expressed in the present concluding observations in its next periodic report under article 18 of the Convention. The Committee invites the State party to submit its combined second and third periodic report in May 2013.

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