



Committee on the Status of Women, NY
A Committee of the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the UN (CoNGO)
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Dear Ms. Pillay,

I am writing to you on behalf of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women New York, an NGO with over 150 member organizations, representing women throughout the world. We wish to express our dismay at the announcement that the CEDAW Committee will no longer meet in New York.

Although adjustments must be made to accommodate budget constraints affecting the UN, this must be done without compromising the effectiveness and efficiency of the Committee's work. Furthermore, we understand that this decision was made without the full consent of the Committee and that it is contrary to the provisions of the Convention stating that CEDAW should normally meet at UN headquarters (NY).

As NGOs who have followed the Committee's work since its beginnings, we can attest that moving the Committee to Geneva will reduce its political presence and impact on UN policies. Key human rights organizations, important to the work of the OHCHR and other conventions, are based in New York, including the CoNGO committee on trafficking of women and girls, the Center for Women's Global Leadership, the International Action Network on Small Arms, Women's Environment and Development Organization and Global Network of Women Peacebuilders. These organizations rely on their annual CEDAW meeting to strategize with other NGOs, member states, and UN agencies as well as with CEDAW experts.

Among the meetings NGOs organized related to CEDAW's work recently was an event between Member States including members of the Security Council, civil society groups working on women, peace and security issues and the CEDAW experts to discuss the CEDAW General Recommendation on Women in conflict and post-conflict situations. NGOs concerned with Security Council resolutions 1325 and other resolutions also participated actively in the daylong CEDAW event related to these concerns. Equally important is the interaction between New York based NGOs and the high-level delegations of ministers and government representatives who present country reports.

The timing of CEDAW's absence is particularly unfortunate as the UN prepares to set its post 2015 agenda on sustainable development. Women's human rights are critical to attaining the new goals and voices at UN headquarters must be loud and clear on this

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Vice Chair: Susan O'Malley, *International Federation of Business and Professional Women* · **Treasurer:** Lois Beilin, *Soroptimist International* · **Recording Secretary:** Mary Ann Tarantula, *Zonta International* ·
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matter. However, if CEDAW no longer meets in New York, the momentum to mainstream CEDAW into the SDGs is seriously affected.

We urge your office to revise your plans to remove the CEDAW committee from New York and permit the committee members to participate in the decision-making process for their future venues.

Sincerely yours,

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