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The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW): Congressional Issues

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Summary

The U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women calls for Parties to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas of life, including healthcare, education, employment, domestic relations, law, commercial transactions, and political participation, among other things. As of August 11, 2006, the Convention had 98 signatures and was ratified or acceded to by 184 countries.

President Carter submitted the Convention to the Senate in 1980. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held hearings on the Convention in 1988, 1990, 1994, and 2002, but the treaty has never been considered for ratification by the full Senate. In 2002, the Bush Administration began conducting a full legal and policy review of the Convention. According to the Administration, as of March 14, 2006, the review was ongoing. A more recent update on the status could not be readily confirmed.

Some supporters of U.S. ratification contend that the Convention is a valuable mechanism for fighting women's discrimination worldwide. They argue that U.S. ratification of the treaty will give the Convention additional legitimacy, and that it will further empower women who are fighting discrimination in other countries. Some opponents of ratification contend that the Convention is not the best or most efficient way to eliminate discrimination against women. They believe ratification will undermine U.S. sovereignty and impact U.S. social policy related to family planning and abortion, among other things.

This report provides background on Convention developments, including U.S. policy and Congressional actions, and considers arguments for and against ratification. It will be updated as events occur.

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CEDAW Background and Structure

Current Status

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW or the Convention) is the only comprehensive international U.N. treaty that specifically focuses on the rights of women.[1] As of August 11, 2006, the Convention had 98 signatures and was ratified or acceded to by 184 countries.[2] Some States Parties[3] have filed reservations with sections of the Convention that do not align with their existing religious or national laws, and in some cases countries have objected to the reservations of other countries.[4] The United States is the only country to have signed but not ratified the Convention.[5]

Mandate

The Convention requires States Parties to work towards eliminating discrimination against women in all areas of life. This includes equality in legal status, political participation, employment, education, healthcare, and the family structure.[6] Article 2 of the Convention specifies that States Parties should undertake

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[1] Women's rights and the equality of the sexes are addressed in general terms in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, among others.

[2] See **Table 1** for a full list of countries that are States Parties to the Convention and its Optional Protocol.

[3] The term "States Parties" refers to countries who have ratified or acceded to the Convention.

[4] Article 28 of the Convention states that reservations can be filed as long as they are compatible with the "object and purpose" of the Convention. A full list of reservations by country can be found at [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations.htm].

[5] The Convention has been adopted by several U.S. state and local governments, including the California and Connecticut Senate, and the House of Representatives in Hawaii, South Dakota, and Illinois, among others. As of November 2005, the Convention has also been adopted by 18 counties and 44 cities.

[6] Drawn from "The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

(continued...)

to "embody the principle of equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation ... to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle." The Convention defines discrimination against women as

> any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil, or any other field.

Among other things, the Convention specifically calls for the suppression of female trafficking; equal pay with men; more attention to the equality of rural women; and the freedom to choose a marriage partner.

On October 6, 1999, the U.N. General Assembly adopted an Optional Protocol to strengthen the Convention.[7] The Protocol entered into force on December 22, 2002, and has been ratified by 79 countries. The Protocol includes a "communications procedure" which allows groups or individuals to file complaints with the Committee. It also incorporates an "inquiry procedure" that allows the Committee to explore potential abuses of women's rights in countries that are party to the Protocol.

Evolution of the Convention

The United Nations adopted several treaties addressing specific aspects of women's rights prior to adoption of CEDAW in 1979, including the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952), and the Convention on the Consent to Marriage (1957).[8] In 1967, after two years of negotiations, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, a non-binding document which laid the groundwork for CEDAW. Subsequently, the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women began drafting CEDAW, which the General Assembly adopted on December 19, 1979.[9] CEDAW entered into force on September 3, 1981, after receiving the required 20 ratifications.

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[6] (...continued)
Women," available at [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm].

[7] Optional Protocols are often added to some treaties. The Optional Protocol for the Convention is a stand-alone treaty that can be signed and/or ratified by countries that are party to the main treaty. For more information on the Optional Protocol to the Convention, see [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/].

[8] More information on international treaty bodies relating to women's right is available at [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/asp/user/list.asp?ParentID=1003].

[9] The Commission on the Status of Women was established in 1946 as a functional commission of the U.N. Economic and Social Council. It is responsible for preparing recommendations and reports for the Council on women's rights in the political, economic, civil, and social realms.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (the Committee) was established in 1982 under Article 17 of the Convention as a mechanism to monitor the progress of implementation.[10] It is composed of 23 independent experts who are elected at a meeting of States Parties to the Convention by secret ballot, with consideration given to the principle of equitable geographic distribution.[11] Each State Party may nominate one expert, and if elected, the expert serves a four-year term. The majority of the Committee experts are women who, according to the Convention, should have "high moral standing and competence," and "represent different forms of civilization as well as principal legal systems." The Committee is led by a Chairperson, three Vice Chairpersons, and a rapporteur elected by the States Parties. The Chairperson directs the discussion and decision-making process and represents the Convention at international conferences and events. The Committee reports annually on its activities to the U.N. General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and meets twice a year at U.N. Headquarters in New York.

The Committee is responsible for reviewing the reports on national CEDAW implementation submitted by States Parties. Countries are required to submit an initial report within the first year of ratification or accession, followed by one report every four years. The reports identify areas of progress as well as concerns or difficulties with implementation. The Committee engages in an open dialogue and exchange of ideas with the reporting country and compiles recommendations and conclusions based on its findings, which include general recommendations on crosscutting issues of concern. The Committee has made over 25 recommendations since 1986 covering a wide range of women's issues such as: improvement in education and public information programs; elimination of female circumcision; equality in marriage and family relations; and violence against women.[12]

The 36th session of the CEDAW Committee was held from August 7 to 25, 2006. The Committee considered reports from Cape Verde, Chile, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Georgia, Ghana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Mexico, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, and Uzbekistan. The Committee made significant progress on the general recommendations related to the migrant rights of women and Article 2 of the Convention. The Committee also recognized China's progress since its last review, but urged faster improvement and expressed concern over the high male to female birth ratio. It also, among other things, acknowledged that the tense political situation in Uzbekistan impacted its

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[10] Some human rights treaties provide for a separate body to monitor implementation of the treaty among States Parties.

[11] Currently, the 23 experts come from Algeria; Bangladesh; Brazil; China; Croatia; Cuba; Egypt; France; Germany; Ghana; Israel; Italy; Jamaica; Japan; Malaysia; Mauritius; Netherlands; Portugal; Republic of Korea; Singapore; Slovenia; South Africa; and Thailand.

[12] A full list of CEDAW Committee recommendations can be found at [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/index.html].

ability to implement the Convention, but noted that progress was made in the area of legislative reform.[13]

U.S. Policy

Administration Actions

Successive U.S. Administrations have strongly supported the Convention's overall goal of eliminating discrimination against women. However, they have disagreed on whether the Convention is the most efficient and appropriate means of achieving this goal. President Jimmy Carter signed the Convention on July 17,1980, and transmitted it to the Senate on November 12 of the same year. The Reagan and first Bush Administrations did not support ratification and the Convention remained pending in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. The Clinton Administration supported ratification, and in 1994 submitted a treaty package to the Senate for advice and consent to ratification. The package included nine proposed "conditions," or "RUDs" to the Convention, including four reservations, three understandings, and two declarations.[14] The Foreign Relations Committee reported the Convention favorably, but it never came to vote in the full Senate. The reservations recommended by the Clinton Administration addressed the following:

- "private conduct," which made clear that the United States "does not accept any obligation under the Convention to regulate private conduct except as mandated by the Constitution and U.S. law";
- "combat assignments," which stated that the United States "does not accept an obligation under the Convention to put women in all combat positions";
- "comparable worth," which made clear that the United States would not accept the doctrine of comparable worth based on the Convention's broad description; and
- "paid maternity leave," which stated that the United States could not guarantee paid maternity leave as the Convention stipulates because it is not a requirement under U.S. federal or state law.

The three understandings submitted by the Clinton Administration stated that: 1) the United States will fulfill its obligations under the Convention in a "manner consistent with its federal role," recognizing that issues such as education are the responsibility of state and local governments; 2) the United States will not accept Convention obligations that restrict freedom of speech or expression; and 3) the United States and other States Parties may decide the nature of the health and family planning services referred to in the Convention, and may determine whether they are

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[13] Additional information and links to specific country reports from the 36th Session of the CEDAW Committee can be found at [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/36sess.htm].

[14] RUDs refers to the "reservations, understandings, and declarations" that traditionally accompany U.S. ratification of a treaty.

"necessary" and "appropriate" to distribute. The proposed Clinton Administration declarations included a "non-self-executing" provision, which proposed that no new laws would be created as a result of Convention ratification; and a "dispute settlement" provision, which stated that the United States was not bound by Convention Article 29(1) which refers unresolved disputes to the International Court of Justice.[15]

The Bush Administration supports the Convention's goal of eradicating discrimination against women on a global scale, but has several concerns with the Convention itself.[16] These concerns were outlined in 2002, when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held hearings on potential ratification of the Convention. A July 8, 2002 letter from then-Secretary of State Colin Powell to the Foreign Relations Committee stated that the Convention was under State and Justice Department review due to concerns regarding "the vagueness of the text of CEDAW and the record of the official U.N. body [the CEDAW Committee] that reviews and comments on the implementation."[17] In particular, the Administration cited "controversial interpretations" of the CEDAW Committee's recommendations to States Parties.[18] The letter specifically cited a Committee report on Belarus that "questioned the celebration of mother's day,"[19] and a report on China that "called for legalized prostitution."[20] According to the Administration, these positions are "contrary to American law and sensibilities."[21]

The Bush Administration also argued that the vagueness of the text opened the door for broad interpretation by international and domestic entities, and contended that the 1994 RUDs did not address these interpretation issues. The Administration also emphasized the importance of ensuring the Convention would not conflict with U.S. constitutional and statutory laws in areas typically controlled by the States.[22] In light of these concerns, the Administration urged the Foreign Relations Committee not to vote on the Convention until a full review was complete. The Administration

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[15] For detailed descriptions of the RUDs, see U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 12, 1994. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office (Senate Exec. Rept. 103-38, 103d Congress, 2d Session), p. 6-8.

[16] "Statement by Ambassador Sichan Siv, U.S. Representative to the U.N. Economic and Social Council," U.S. Mission to the United Nations Press Release, October 30, 2003.

[17] Letter from Secretary of State Colin Powell to Senator Joseph Biden, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 8, 2002.

[18] Letter from Daniel J. Bryan, Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, to Senator Joseph Biden, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 26, 2002.

[19] U.N. document, A/55/38(SUPP), paragraph 361, January 1, 2000.

[20] U.N. document, A/54/38REV.1(SUPP), paragraphs 288-289, January 1, 1999.

[21] Letter from Daniel J. Bryan, Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice, to Senator Joseph Biden, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, July 26, 2002.

[22] Ibid.

review of the Convention began in mid-April 2002, and was confirmed to be ongoing as of March 14, 2006.[23] The current status of the review cannot be readily confirmed.

Senate Actions

The Convention has been pending in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for over 25 years. The Committee held hearings in 1988 and 1990, but did not vote to favorably recommend the Convention for advice and consent to the Senate. In June 1994, hearings were held at the request of the Clinton Administration. The Convention was reported favorably out of the Committee by a vote of 13 to 5, but was never brought to vote in the full Senate.[24]

In June 2002, under the Chairmanship of Senator Joseph Biden, the Foreign Relations Committee held hearings on potential ratification of the Convention. The Committee heard testimony from non-governmental organizations, individuals from the academic and other fields, and relevant agencies and organizations arguing for and against ratification.[25] On July 30, 2002, the Committee reported the Convention favorably by a vote of 12 to 7, subject to four reservations, five understandings, and two declarations.[26] These included the nine RUDs recommended by the Clinton Administration in 1994, plus two additional understandings. These included a 1994 understanding proposed by Senator Jesse Helms which stated that "nothing in this Convention shall be construed to reflect or create any right to abortion and in no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning." In 2002, Senator Biden sponsored an understanding which stated that "the CEDAW Committee has no authority to compel parties to follow its recommendations." The 107th Congress adjourned before the Senate could vote on the Convention, which remains pending in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In subsequent years, the House of Representatives continued to demonstrate an ongoing interest in the Convention. On February 2, 2005, Representative Lynn Woolsey introduced a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that "the Senate should ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." The proposed resolution currently has

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[23] "State's Ponticelli Discusses Women's Political Participation," USINFO Webchat Transcript, March 14, 2006.

[24] For more information on the 1994 hearings, see U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 12, 1994. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office (Senate Exec. Rept. 103-38, 103d Congress, 2d Session).

[25] Witnesses included Members of Congress, representatives from the World Family Policy Center, the American Enterprise Institute, Business and Professional Women/USA, and the former U.S. Representative to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women.

[26] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 6, 2002. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office (Senate Exec. Rept. 107-9, 107th Congress, 2d Session), p. 7-11.

115 cosponsors.[27] Representative Woolsey introduced similar legislation in the 108th and 106th Congresses, with 104 and 122 cosponsors, respectively.[28]

Issues for Congress

This section addresses issues that have emerged in the ongoing debate over ratification of the Convention. These issues may continue to play a role in the debate if the Senate considers the Convention during the 110th Congress. Since the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held hearings on CEDAW in 2002, it appears that the momentum for ratification within Congress and the Administration has declined, and it is unclear when and if the Convention might be considered again.

Under the U.S. Constitution, the Senate, along with the President, is responsible for making treaties.[29] Once the President transmits a treaty to the Senate, it is referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. The House of Representatives plays a role in the treaty process only when separate legislative action for implementation is required. Thus, the issues for Congress discussed herein are issues that may be included in any consideration of the Convention by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and/or the full Senate. If the Senate decides to consider the Convention, some of the following issues may continue to play a role in the debate over ratification.

The Effectiveness of the Convention

Whether the Convention has been an effective mechanism for addressing women's rights internationally has been a topic of controversy. Proponents of the Convention, such as Representative Woolsey, describe the Convention as a "powerful tool" for women globally and emphasize that the United States is the only industrialized country that has not ratified the Convention.[30] Advocates such as Senators Joseph Biden and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) argue that the Convention empowers women to achieve equality in their own countries, and cite specific examples of the Convention's success in achieving its purpose.[31] Some non-

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[27] H.Res. 67 [109th], introduced February 2, 2005, by Representative Lynn Woolsey, referred to the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Relations, March 17, 2005.

[28] H.Res. 21 [108th], introduced January 7, 2003; and H.Res. 107 [106th], introduced March 10, 1999.

[29] See Article II, section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. More information on the treaty process is available at [http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/briefing/Treaties.htm].

[30] *Congressional Record*, House of Representatives, June 16, 2005, H4612.

[31] Senators Joseph Biden and Barbara Boxer, "Op-Ed: Senate Needs to Ratify the Treaty for the Rights of Women," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 13, 2002. Senators Biden and Boxer described a Tanzanian woman who reportedly "used the provisions of the treaty to ensure that she could sell land she inherited from her father, overcoming an initial court ruling which held that, as a woman, she could not sell land held by the clan."

governmental organizations (NGOs) have also recorded the Convention's effectiveness in improving women's rights in specific countries and regions.[32]

Opponents of ratification recognize that global discrimination against women is a problem that should be eliminated, but they do not view the Convention as the most effective way to achieve this goal. Some contend that the Convention hurts rather than helps women struggling for human rights internationally. They argue that the Convention "serves as a facade for continuing atrocities," in countries that are State Parties to the Convention, such as China and North Korea.[33] Some opponents also contend that when considering treaty ratification, the Senate should act based on the standard of what is best for the American people.[34]

The Convention as a Tool for U.S. Foreign Policy

Congressional and non-congressional supporters of the Convention contend that U.S. ratification will increase the credibility of the United States abroad and enhance its ability to champion women's rights in other countries.[35] The 2002 Foreign Relations Committee report stated that the United States should support ratification because, among other things, it "will give our diplomats a tool — a means to press other governments to fulfill their obligations under the Convention."[36] To illustrate this point, some ratification supporters cite a June 12, 2002 letter to the Foreign Relations Committee from Dr. Sima Samar, the then-Afghan Minister of Women's Affairs. In the letter, Dr. Samar asks the Senate to ratify the Convention, and says that "we will then be able to tell our countrymen that the United States, where women already have full legal rights, has just seen the need to ratify this treaty ... we

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[32] Amnesty International examples of the Convention successes can be found at [http://www.amnestyusa.org/women/cedaw/world.html].

[33] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Treaty Doc. 96-53; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 18, 1979, and signed on behalf of the United States of America on July 17, 1980." Hearing, June 13, 2003. 107th Congress, 2d Session. Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002, S.Hrg. 107-530, p. 15.

[34] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 6, 2002. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office (Senate Exec. Rept. 107-9, 107th Congress, 2d Session), p. 21.

[35] Human Rights Watch stated in a June 13, 2002 letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "By ratifying CEDAW, the U.S. government will be in a stronger position to support women's rights.... Having not ratified CEDAW, U.S. intervention in support of women's rights may be construed as 'cultural imperialism' or an 'American' agenda, as opposed to a rights-based approach."

[36] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 6, 2002. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office (Senate Exec. Rept. 107-9, 107th Congress, 2d Session), p. 5.

will be able to refer to its terms and guidelines in public debates over what our laws should say."[37]

Opponents of this argument emphasize that the United States "has the strongest record on opportunities and rights for women in the world,"[38] and maintain the United States does not need to ratify the Convention to further its women's rights policies. In the minority views of the 2002 Foreign Relations Committee report, Senators Helms, Brownback, and Enzi stated that Afghan women were "relieved of the burden of an oppressive, anti-woman government" by "the personal heroism and sacrifice" of American forces, and not through a multilateral treaty such as CEDAW.[39]

U.S. Sovereignty

The question of whether to ratify the Convention has generated considerable debate regarding U.S. sovereignty and international law. The minority views in the 2002 Senate Foreign Relations Committee report stated that the Convention represents "a disturbing international trend" of favoring international law over U.S. constitutional law and self-government, thereby undermining U.S. sovereignty.[40] In particular, they were concerned that the Convention's description of discrimination against women is too broad, and that it may "apply to private organizations and areas of personal conduct not covered by U.S. law."[41]

Supporters of the Convention maintain that ratification would not affect U.S. sovereignty. Senator Biden stated that the Convention will impose a "minimal burden" on the United States given that the U.S. Constitution and other existing federal and state laws already meet the obligations of the Convention. He also stated that the United States would file several RUDs to ensure that no new laws were created to meet the obligations of the Convention.[42]

Social Issues

Some opponents of ratification are concerned that the Convention may catalyze a pro-abortion movement in the United States and interfere with family rights such as marriage and parenting. They contend that the Convention is an effort to "redefine

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[37] Ibid, 6.

[38] Ibid, 16.

[39] Ibid, 21.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid, 16.

[42] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Treaty Doc. 96-53; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 18, 1979, and signed on behalf of the United States of America on July 17, 1980." Hearing, June 13, 2003. 107th Congress, 2d Session. Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002, S.Hrg. 107-530, p. 3.

the family,"[43] arguing that CEDAW will "help lawyers and other pro-abortion advocates reach the goal of enshrining unrestricted access to abortion in the United States."[44] Some opponents are also particularly concerned with the Convention's references to "family planning,"[45] and state that U.S. ratification of the Convention will, among other things, undercut parental rights, and lead to gender re-education, homosexual rights, and legalized prostitution.[46]

In response to criticism that ratification may impact family planning or abortion policy in the United States, some supporters emphasize that the word "abortion" is never mentioned in the Convention text. They refer to a 1994 State Department determination that the Convention is "abortion neutral," and contend that several of the RUDs proposed, such as the understandings on the CEDAW Committee and abortion, adequately address the concerns of ratification opponents concerned with family, abortion and family planning issues.[47] Some supporters of ratification also emphasize that countries where abortion is illegal, such as Ireland and Rwanda, have ratified the Convention.[48]

Administration Review of the Convention

Opponents of ratification objected to Senate consideration of the Convention without a full legal and policy review from the Administration. In 2002 some Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee argued that the Senate should not consider the Convention because "eight years of U.S. federal and state jurisprudence," had not yet been taken into account.[49] Senators representing the minority view recommended that "the Senate defer action on the Convention until

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[43] "Women for Faith and Family Statement on CEDAW," May 25, 2000, available at [http://www.wf-f.org/CEDAW.html].

[44] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 6, 2002. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, (Senate Exec. Rept. 107-9, 107th Congress, 2d Session), p. 22.

[45] The words "family planning" are mentioned in the Introduction, Article 10(h), Article 12, and Article 14(b) of the Convention.

[46] Laurel MacLeod, Catherina Hurlburt, "Exposing CEDAW," *Concerned Women for America Publication*, September 5, 2000. Available at [http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=1971&department=CWA&categoryid=nation]. For further information, see "How U.N. Conventions on Women's and Children's Rights Undermine Family, Religion, and Sovereignty," by Patrick F. Fagan, *The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder*, February 5, 2001.

[47] "Myths and Realities: The U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," *The United Nations Association of the United States of America*, August 2002, available at [http://www.unausa.org/site/pp.asp?c=fvKRI8MPJpF&b=337341].

[48] "Letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Urging that CEDAW Move to the Full Senate," *Human Rights Watch*, July 29, 2002.

[49] Ibid, 20.

the Administration's analysis and views are available."[50] A timetable for review was not put forward or agreed to at the hearing. As of March 14, 2006, the Administration review was currently ongoing, and there is no indication as to when it will be completed.

[50] U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women," Report, September 6, 2002. Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, (Senate Exec. Rept. 107-9, 107th Congress, 2d Session) p. 15.

Table 1. States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

(as of August 11, 2006)

*ratified or acceded to the Optional Protocol

Afghanistan
Albania *
Algeria
Andorra *
Angola
Antigua and Barbuda *
Argentina
Armenia
Australia
Austria *
Azerbaijan *
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bangladesh *
Barbados
Belarus *
Belgium *
Belize *
Benin
Bhutan
Bolivia *
Bosnia & Herzegovina *
Botswana
Brazil *
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso *
Burundi
Cambodia
Cameroon *
Canada *
Cape Verde
Central African Republic
Chad
Chile
China
Colombia
Cook Islands
Comoros
Congo

Costa Rica *
Cote d'Ivoire
Croatia *
Cuba
Cyprus *
Czech Republic *
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark *
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Republic *
Ecuador *
Egypt
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Fiji
Finland *
France *

Gabon
Gambia
Georgia
Germany *
Ghana
Greece *
Grenada
Guatemala *
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Hungary *
Iceland *
India
Indonesia
Iraq
Ireland *
Israel
Italy *
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan *
Kenya
Kiribati
Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan *
Lao Peoples Democratic Rep.
Latvia
Lebanon
Lesotho *
Liberia
Libyan A. Jamahiriya *
Liechtenstein *
Lithuania *
Luxembourg *
Madagascar
Malawi

Malaysia
Maldives *
Mali *
Malta
Marshall Islands
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico *
Micronesia
Monaco
Mongolia *
Morocco
Mozambique
Myanmar
Namibia *
Nepal
Netherlands *
New Zealand *
Nicaragua
Niger *
Nigeria *
Norway *

Oman
Pakistan
Panama *
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay *
Peru *
Philippines *
Poland *
Portugal *
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova *
Romania *
Russian Federation *
Rwanda
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
St. Vincent & the Grenadines
Samoa
San Marino *
Sao Tome and Principe
Saudi Arabia
Senegal *
Serbia and Montenegro*
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia *
Slovenia *
Solomon Islands *
South Africa *
Spain *
Sri Lanka *
Suriname
Swaziland
Sweden*
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Tajikistan
Thailand *
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia *
Timor-Leste
Togo
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey *
Turkmenistan
Tuvalu
Uganda
Ukraine *
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom *
United Republic of Tanzania *
Uruguay *
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Venezuela *
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe