

Ministry for Women Advice Cover Sheet

Wednesday, 30 January 2019

Simplified reporting on CEDAW

Briefing No:	MW 18-19 0298
Doc Ref No:	D-222781
Min Office No:	
Priority:	Low

Purpose

This briefing seeks your agreement to adopt the United Nations simplified reporting procedure for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Action sought

From	Action sought	Suggested Deadline
Minister for Women Hon Julie Anne Genter	<p>Agree that New Zealand will adopt the United Nations simplified reporting procedure for the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women.</p> <p>Note the process underway to track and monitor Government's progress in relation to all UN human rights treaty body recommendations</p>	Thursday, 28 February 2019

Resources used to prepare this advice

Work Programme	Output Plan or Ministerial Priority <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Responding to ad hoc requests <input type="checkbox"/>	Other agency work (budget/governance) <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of Project	CEDAW		

Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone	1 st Contact
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Simplified reporting on CEDAW

Purpose

1. This briefing seeks your agreement to adopt the United Nations simplified reporting procedure for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It also provides you with information on the process underway to track and monitor Government's progress in relation to all UN human rights treaty body recommendations. The process is being led by the Ministry of Justice.

The simplified reporting procedure will make reporting more efficient

2. In recent years, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) processes of examination and reporting have placed a significant compliance burden on the Ministry for Women (the Ministry). Under the current reporting procedure, after the submission of the periodic report, the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the Committee) releases a list of follow-up issues and questions. This requires submission of an additional written response from the Government prior to examination of the periodic report.
3. In March 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) received an invitation from the Committee asking the New Zealand Government to adopt the simplified reporting procedure. Under the simplified reporting procedure, the Committee would provide New Zealand with a *list of issues prior to reporting* (LOIPR).
4. The New Zealand Government response to the LOIPR will constitute our 9th periodic report, strengthening New Zealand's capacity to report in a timely and effective manner. After New Zealand has submitted its response to LOIPR, no further list of issues from the Committee or subsequent reports from the Government will be required prior to examination.

Agencies across government are using the simplified reporting procedure

5. Reports received under this procedure will be scheduled for examination by the Committee as a matter of priority. While New Zealand's eighth periodic report was submitted in June 2016, the examination was not held until July 2018. A smaller delay between reporting and examination minimises the data updates required to prepare for the examination, thus lessening the burden on agencies.

6. Reporting agencies across government have adopted the simplified reporting procedure as it allows for a more focussed and efficient reporting process. Examples of reports the simplified reporting procedure is used for include, but are not limited to, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
7. The Ministry recommends that you, as the Minister responsible for CEDAW reporting, agree to adopt the simplified reporting procedure. While there is no requirement to make a decision on this issue immediately, we consider there is merit in doing so now, to ensure the process from now on is as straightforward as possible. Subject to your approval the Ministry will relay your decision to the CEDAW secretariat via MFAT.

Improving domestic process for international human rights monitoring and reporting

8. To improve reporting against human rights treaty body recommendations across Government, the Ministry of Justice is developing proposals to streamline New Zealand's reporting processes. Currently, New Zealand does not have a consistent and coordinated approach to monitor the recommendations we receive in areas where the various human rights treaty bodies believe we are falling short of our obligations. This means it is difficult for Government to track and measure progress on their implementation and can result in recommendations being overlooked and not implemented. This leaves New Zealand exposed at the UN and affects our international reputation as a human rights leader.
9. A Cabinet Paper proposing that the Human Rights Commission's National Plan of Action – Mahere Rautaki ā-Motu (NPA) become the central tool for tracking and monitoring Governments' progress in relation to all treaty body recommendations is currently being prepared by the Ministry of Justice. A central tracking tool will ensure Government responds to recommendations in a deliberate and meaningful way and, alongside the simplified reporting procedure, will further assist in the implementation of our obligations under CEDAW. The Ministry of Justice have advised that the timing for consideration of the Cabinet paper by Cabinet has not yet been confirmed.

Recommendations

The Ministry recommends that you:

1. **Agree** that New Zealand will adopt the United Nations simplified reporting procedure for the 9th periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women.

Agree / ~~disagree~~

2. **Note** the information provided on the Minister of Justice's proposal to make the Human Rights Commission's publicly available NPA the central tool for tracking and monitoring Government's progress in relation to all human rights treaty body recommendations.

Noted



Lis Cowey
Director, Policy



Hon Julie Anne Genter
Minister for Women

Date... 14 Feb 2019