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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

REFERENCE: BN/follow-up/RepublicOfKorea/93

30 October 2026

Excellency,

In my capacity as Rapporteur on follow-up on concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), I have the honor to refer to the examination of the ninth periodic report of the Republic of Korea, at the Committee's eithy-eigth session, held in June 2024. At the end of that session, the Committee's concluding observations (CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/9) were transmitted to your Permanent Mission. You may recall that in paragraph 59 on follow-up to the concluding observations, the Committee requested the Republic of Korea to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 13 (a), 19 (b), 27 (a) and 31 (a) of the concluding observations.

The Committee welcomes the follow-up report (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9) received on time on 28 May 2026 under the CEDAW follow-up procedure. At its ninety-third session, held in October 2026, the Committee examined this follow-up report and adopted the following assessment.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 13 (a)** of the concluding observations that the State party "**set a concrete timeline for the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation ensuring de jure and de facto formal and substantive equality, addressing both direct and indirect discrimination in the public and private spheres, as well as intersecting forms of discrimination faced by disadvantaged groups of women and girls, such as women living in poverty, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, women with disabilities, asylum-seeking and refugee women, stateless and migrant women, rural women, single women, adolescents and older women, in line with articles 1 and 2 of the Convention**":

The Committee notes the State party's indication that two anti-discrimination bills have been introduced in the National Assembly as of March 2026, covering direct, indirect and intersectional discrimination in both public and private sectors, and that the State party will actively promote social dialogue (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, para. 2).

H.E. Ms. Seongmee Yoon
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva
Email: geneva.korea@mofa.go.kr

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The Committee regrets that comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation has remained stalled for more than 20 years, notwithstanding 14 recommendations by United Nations human rights treaty bodies and repeated recommendations during successive cycles of the Universal Periodic Review. The Committee notes with serious concern that the State party has not provided a concrete timeline for the adoption of such legislation and limiting itself to expressing willingness to participate in parliamentary discussions rather than actively advancing the legislation.

The Committee considers that the State party has not taken some steps to implement the recommendation. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **been partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party relates to the recommendation but does not address its core element, notably to set a concrete timeline. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 13 (a)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Set a concrete timeline for the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation ensuring de jure and de facto formal and substantive equality, addressing both direct and indirect discrimination in the public and private spheres, as well as intersecting forms of discrimination faced by disadvantaged groups of women and girls, such as women living in poverty, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, women with disabilities, asylum-seeking and refugee women, stateless and migrant women, rural women, single women, adolescents and older women, in line with articles 1 and 2 of the Convention.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 19 (b)** of the concluding observations that the State party **"substantially increase the human, technical and financial resources of the Ministry and provide capacity-building to its staff in order to enable it to effectively coordinate efforts to mainstream gender across all government departments"**:

The Committee welcomes the State party's indication that the Government Organization Act was amended in October 2025 to expand and reorganize the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, including the establishment of a Gender Equality Policy Office with newly created divisions and 17 additional personnel, and that the Ministry's budget for 2026 increased by 13 per cent compared to 2025 (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, paras. 3-4). The Committee also notes the reorganization of the Gender Equality Council into a three-tier structure and the expansion of gender equality policy officers to all ministries (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, para. 5).

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The Committee notes, however, that despite these measures the State party has not demonstrated that the increased resources allocated are sufficient to enable the Ministry to effectively fulfil its coordination and oversight functions across all government departments.

The Committee further notes the absence of information on concrete measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of the restructuring on the Ministry's capacity to mainstream gender across all government departments.

The Committee considers that the State party has taken some positive steps to implement the recommendation but that further action is needed to ensure that the Ministry is provided with resources commensurate with its coordination mandate. It therefore considers that the recommendation has been **partially implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party is thorough and relates directly to the recommendation but does not fully address the adequacy of the resources allocated. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 19 (b)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Substantially increase the human, technical and financial resources of the Ministry and provide capacity-building to its staff in order to enable it to effectively coordinate efforts to mainstream gender across all government departments.

In relation to the recommendation made in **paragraph 27 (a)** of the concluding observations to **"amend the Penal Code to incorporate a definition of rape based on lack of affirmative, free and voluntary consent, covering any non-consensual sexual act, and that takes into account all coercive circumstances, including marital rape, in line with international human rights standards**":

The Committee notes the State party's indication that the introduction of a consent-based definition of rape requires sufficient public discussion, given issues related to the burden of proof and procedural burdens in criminal proceedings (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, para. 9). The Committee further notes the State party's indication that marital rape is already punishable under the current definition of rape in Article 297 of the Penal Code, as it does not exclude spouses from the subject of a criminal offence (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, para. 9).

The Committee notes with serious concern that the State party has taken no steps to amend the Penal Code to introduce a consent-based definition of rape.

The Committee considers that the State party has not taken any concrete steps to implement the recommendation. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

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The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party does not address the recommendation and fails to demonstrate any progress towards its implementation. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **unsatisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 27 (a)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

Amend the Penal Code to incorporate a definition of rape based on lack of affirmative, free and voluntary consent, covering any non-consensual sexual act, and that takes into account all coercive circumstances, including marital rape, in line with international human rights standards.

Regarding the recommendation made in **paragraph 31 (a)** of the concluding observations to "**recognize the right of victims/survivors to a remedy, and accordingly provide full and effective redress and reparation, including compensation, satisfaction, official apologies and rehabilitative services**":

The Committee notes the State party's indication that it has expanded support for surviving victims, including increased monthly subsidies for livelihood stability and nursing expenses, and that the Act on Protection, Support and Commemorative Projects for "Comfort Women" Victims was amended to prohibit acts that defame the honour of victims by denying or distorting the facts of their victimization (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, paras. 15-18). The Committee also notes the State party's indication that it continues to conduct systematic research and archival management, including through the digital archive repository "Archive 814", and that it organizes annual international conferences and commemorative events to promote historical awareness (CEDAW/C/KOR/FCO/9, paras. 20-23).

The Committee further notes with grave concern that the State party has not taken concrete measures to implement the final and binding judgments of its own domestic courts ordering reparations to survivors, in line with a victim-centred approach.

The Committee considers that the State party has not taken any steps to implement the recommendation. It therefore considers that the recommendation has **not been implemented**.

The Committee considers that the information provided by the State party relates partially to the recommendation but fails to address its core elements. It thus considers that the quality of the information provided is **partially satisfactory**.

The Committee recommends that, in relation to **paragraph 31 (a)** of the concluding observations, the State party provide, **in its next periodic report**, information on further actions taken to:

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Recognize the right of victims/survivors to a remedy, and accordingly provide full and effective redress and reparation, including compensation, satisfaction, official apologies and rehabilitative services.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Jelena Pia-Comella
Rapporteur on follow-up
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women