

## **CEDAW Optional Protocol**

The Optional Protocol to the Convention offers international recourse against violations of women's human rights under its individual complaints and inquiry procedures, and has been ratified by 105 States parties. By signing the Optional Protocol, a State recognizes the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the group that monitors States parties' compliance with the Convention, to receive and consider complaints from individuals or groups within its jurisdiction.

Under the individual complaints procedure, the CEDAW Committee has found violations of the rights under the Convention in 16 cases as of the end of September 2014. These cases have dealt with a range of issues including domestic violence; sexual violence; forced sterilization; reproductive and sexual health and rights (maternal mortality or denial of access to abortion following rape); maternity leave entitlements, including for self-employed; gender stereotypes by the judiciary in a rape trial; discrimination in respect to property rights; conditions of detention and gender-based discrimination in the workplace.

Further to the recommendations contained in the Committee's views on the above-mentioned cases, several States parties have taken a number of measures, including individual measures, such as payment of compensation to rectify the situation. General measures, such as carrying out national action plans or programmes on different subjects, a change of medical protocols, training for officials on gender-related or gender-based violence matters, and awareness raising through targeted campaigns to eradicate stereotypes have also taken place.