

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

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), an international treaty commonly known as the bill of rights for women, has been ratified by 188 States parties. However, the goal of universal ratification of the Convention by the year 2000, set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, has not been achieved.

The Convention permits States to ratify it subject to reservations, provided that the reservations are not incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention. Eleven States parties have withdrawn reservations, in full or in part, between 2010 and 2014. Some 15 States parties maintain reservations on article 2, concerned with anti-discrimination policies, and 25 States parties maintain reservations on article 16, focused on eliminating discrimination in marriage and family relations. The CEDAW Committee considers articles 2 and 16 to be core provisions of the Convention and has expressed concern at the number and extent of reservations entered to those articles.