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# **Elections 2022**

# **Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**

# **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

# **Human Rights Committee (HRCttee)**

# **Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**

# **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)**

# **Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)**

Questionnaire for candidates

Six UN Treaty Bodies (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Human Rights Committee (HRCttee), Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)) will have elections organised in 2022.

In order to strengthen the treaty bodies, the International Disability Alliance, Child Rights Connect, IWRAW Asia Pacific, the Centre for Civil and Political Rights, and the Global Initiative For Economic, Social And Cultural Rights – as part of [TB-Net](https://tbnet.org/en/), the NGO network on the UN Treaty Bodies – seek to promote quality, independence and diversity of treaty body membership through transparent and participatory nomination and elections processes.

This questionnaire, which is sent to all nominated candidates and is based on the criteria set forth in the relevant treaties and in the General Assembly Resolution 68/268, will enable all States and other stakeholders to better understand the skills, experiences and motivation of running candidates to CRPD, CEDAW, HRCttee, CRC and CESCR in advance of the elections.

The written responses to the questionnaires will be made available on the website [www.untbelections.org](http://www.untbelections.org), while the video responses will be shared on a dedicated [YouTube page](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3AE1yyjFFbfT9G9lFKAaTQ).

*This initiative does not imply that we support or oppose any individual candidates.*

## Questions for all treaty bodies candidates

1. Name: **Ana Peláez Narváez**

2. Nationality: **Spanish**

3. Current position:

**- Expert on the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2019-2022) and Vice-Chair of the committee for the period 2021-2022.**

**- Executive Vice-President at CERMI Women’s Foundation (the umbrella organisation for women with disabilities in Spain).**

**- ONCE Social Group High Commissioner for Solidarity and International Co-operation.**

**- Vice-President of the European Disability Forum (EDF) and Chair of its Women’s Committee.**

4. Are you currently holding, or have you previously held any position on behalf of, or for, your Government (Executive branch) that may compromise your actual or perceived independence and impartiality? If so, please give details:

**No, I have no political affiliation and I am not holding any position on behalf of my Government.**

5. Please indicate any current or potential conflict of interest that may prevent you from exercising independence and impartiality in your work as a member of a UN treaty body:

**None**

6. Was the nomination process for your candidacy a transparent and participatory process? Was civil society or other relevant stakeholders involved?

**The nomination is the response from the Spanish government to requests from the disability movement channelled through the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities (CERMI in Spanish) and its member organisations. The nomination is endorsed by the European Disability Forum (EDF) and its member organisations, and by the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and its member organisations.**

7. During your possible mandate as a Committee member, what other positions or professional activities do you intend to engage in?

**I intend to continue working for the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind (ONCE), the CERMI Women’s Foundation, and the European Disability Forum (EDF).**

8. The commitments as a Committee member are very time-consuming during and outside session time. How will you ensure to have the capacity to dedicate the necessary time to the work of the Committee, both in person and online?

**The organisations I work for are very aware of the amount of work involved in my taking part in the Committee as an expert and they fully support my dedication to the Committee. Furthermore, they provide support for me to overcome the obstacles I face in the Committee related to access to information.**

**In addition, given that a large part of the Committee’s work programme is scheduled in advance, I can make adjustments internally to alter my agenda to be able to take on board all responsibilities, taking advantage of the human, financial and technological resources available to perform these tasks.**

9. What are the current and main challenges that you see for the treaty body system and what are your ideas for improvement?

**In my view, the main challenge we currently face as experts is to conclude the treaty body strengthening and efficiency enhancement process, which should have been finalised in 2020. This process should help us to simplify and better contextualise the State Party examination procedures, to strengthen and harmonise jurisprudence on common issues, and to facilitate and improve synergies among treaty bodies.**

**A second key challenge is to work to overcome the backlog in the work of human rights treaty bodies as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and because the examination of State parties’ reports was postponed. In my view and to address this, there are several possible solutions to work through the backlog:**

**a) Add extra time to the treaty bodies sessions during a couple of years to be able to increase the number of countries coming under examination.**

**b) Simplify the State parties review system and the time spent on each one by focussing on the most urgent questions, including those related to the impact of the pandemic. This will enable us to increase considerably the number of countries per period of sessions until such time as we overcome the backlog.**

**c) Hold extraordinary regional periods of sessions in line with the good practise employed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Samoa in 2020.**

**The third challenge for me is the lack of collaborative work between treaty bodies. I think the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should carry out strategic planning of the treaty bodies’ periods of sessions so that during the weeks the meetings of two committees overlap in Geneva they can strengthen their co-operation.**

**Having served on the CRPD Committee for two consecutive terms of office, I believe I can bring to the CEDAW Committee a permanent link in order to address questions related to women and girls with disabilities.**

10. Given the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide and the disruption of in person meetings of treaty bodies, will you be willing to adapt to undertake online work during your mandate, as an increasing way of functioning of the Committees?

**With my IT skills and ability to communicate in three of the UN working languages – English, Spanish and French – I am totally prepared to hold on-line meetings and work virtually. Nevertheless, for this work to be fully effective, United Nations must ensure its platforms are totally accessible, and this didn’t always happen during the pandemic. When I came across accessibility problems during this period, my organisation stepped in to provide the human resources support I needed to overcome this important obstacle.**

Link to your full resume: [**https://disabilityforcedaw.es/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Ana-Pela%CC%81ez-Narva%CC%81ez-CV-for-CEDAW-2022.docx**](https://disabilityforcedaw.es/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Ana-Pela%CC%81ez-Narva%CC%81ez-CV-for-CEDAW-2022.docx)



**Questions for candidates to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee)**

*Please provide responses that are as precise as possible and in no more than 200 words per question.*

1.Why do you want to be a member of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women? ([video option](https://www.iwraw-ap.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/cedaw_guidelinesvideo_en.pdf))

**Women and girls with disabilities must be considered systematically in the work of the CEDAW Committee because it is estimated that they account for 20% of the global population of women. They are among the poorest people and suffer aggravated forms of discrimination.**

**I would also like to focus on reinforcing the work of the CEDAW Committee relating to the multiple discrimination that many women from disadvantaged groups suffer, such as older women, migrant women, rural women, LBTI women, young women, etc. This means strengthening the intersectional approach to women’s human rights in concluding observations and in the Committee’s jurisprudence.**

**Moreover, it is necessary to identify efforts to ensure there is a greater dimension of human diversity and all women are identified, and especially those who come from invisible and forgotten populations, in the composition of CEDAW Committee.**

**Finally, as a result of the pandemic my work as an expert on the Committee during this first term of office was severely curtailed because the number of sessions and other events was slashed significantly or completely cancelled. This is why I have not yet had enough time to contribute everything I have to offer to the CEDAW Committee.**

2. What are your specific areas of expertise in relation to CEDAW? Please provide examples as appropriate.([video option](https://www.iwraw-ap.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/cedaw_guidelinesvideo_en.pdf))

**My areas of expertise are women and girls with disabilities and women from disadvantaged groups such as older women, migrant women, rural women, LBTI women, etc.**

**Some examples of my work during my first mandate on the Committee are: I was country rapporteur for several countries’ periodic report; member of the working groups on General Recommendations 38 and 39; member of the Committee’s working groups on working methods and on gender-based violence against women; and member of the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies Working Group on COVID-19 on behalf of the CEDAW Committee. Since February 2021, I am Vice-Chair of the Committee representing the WEOG regional group and a member of the Committee Bureau.**

**Some examples of my intersessional work are: providing technical assistance and leading training on the Convention and its Optional Protocol to several States Parties such as Argentina, Guatemala, Uruguay, Colombia, Ecuador and Andorra; collaboration with the OHCHR, UN Women, UNICEF and the UNPFA on events concerning women with disabilities and to strengthen disability and gender in position papers; and participation in high-level events on gender equality and violence against women organised by the UN Human Rights Council, the European Commission and the Council of Europe.**

3. What do you think are the most critical and emerging issues for women’s human rights and gender equality? Please provide 1-2 examples.

**Although there are many key questions, in my opinion at the present time the most critical and emerging issues for women’s human rights and gender equality are:**

**a Gender-based violence against women and the new trend to deny its existence.**

**b Women and girls in armed conflicts and in other areas where they suffer threats and reprisals, and how the CEDAW Committee can protect them.**

**c How to combat harmful gender-based stereotypes against women.**

**d Strengthening the Committee’s jurisprudence concerning the most disadvantaged groups of women, such as women with disabilities.**

**e Ensuring that states’ COVID-19 recovery plans truly take women into consideration, and in particular those who belong to disadvantaged groups.**

4. How will you ensure that the rights and issues of the most marginalised groups of women are addressed by the Committee? What measures should States take to ensure the political participation of marginalised groups of women in political life, at the local, national and international levels, including enhancing representation within the CEDAW Committee?

**When examining State Party reports the CEDAW Committee addresses the most marginalised groups of women under articles 4 and 14. Moreover, they are normally included when addressing other articles if they have particular concerns. This twin-track approach is also applied in general recommendations: some focus exclusively on marginalised groups of women (draft GR 39 on indigenous women and girls, …), while in other recommendations they are referenced when they have particular concerns (GR 35 on violence, …). In my view, this method is the most suitable one. Nevertheless, I would like to see GR 19 on disabled women (1991) updated as its approach is based on a medical and rehabilitation paradigm and not on a human-rights approach.**

**Regarding political participation, the CEDAW Committee has two pertinent recommendations: GR 23 on political and public life and GR 25 on temporary special measures. These instruments should be the guidelines for State Parties in this respect. States must ensure that all measures are fully inclusive and accessible, because if not then women from disadvantaged groups will continue to be left behind.**

**The CEDAW Committee must reflect diversity in their composition and ensure all their processes and activities are fully inclusive and accessible.**

5. What do you think are the areas where the Committee can further strengthen international women’s rights standards?

**Considering the current areas of interest shown by some experts on the CEDAW Committee, the areas in which the Committee can further strengthen international women’s rights standards are the fight against harmful gender-based stereotypes, equal access for women to decision-making processes, women in diplomacy, women and girls with disabilities and women human rights defenders.**

6. What has been your experience of working with the women’s rights movement in your country or globally?

**For over 20 years now I have had ongoing contact and I co-operate regularly with women’s organisations in Spain, Europe, Latin America and other parts of the world. My closest link is with the women with disabilities movement and I try to help this movement in its capacity building to enhance its level of empowerment and collective leadership.**

**During my first term of office on the CEDAW Committee, I have had many meetings with women’s organisations, working with them on States Party examinations and other CEDAW Committee-related tasks.**

**Intersectionally, I have responded to many invitations from civil society worldwide. Due to the word limit I am unable to name all these organisations, but I am very grateful to all of them for including me in their work. Unfortunately, the CEDAW Committee does not yet have in place measures to ensure the inclusive and effective participation of organisations of women with disabilities.**

7. State parties to CEDAW are required to take steps to implement the Convention. How do you propose to help guide States in the effective implementation of Convention standards? How will you guide States in the removal of reservations to the Convention, especially reservations that relate to the object and purpose of the Convention (Articles 2 and 16)?

**I suggest the CEDAW Committee focuses its action on the main obstacles found in order to implement the Convention, so it should hold days of general debate, issue general recommendations and give technical advice to States parties on these issues.**

**It would be interesting for the CEDAW Committee to consider a General Recommendation (GR) on Article 5 of the convention: Stereotyping and Cultural Prejudices. It is necessary to ask States what means they are using to change attitudes at all levels of society, from government level down to village level, in informal as well as formal education and employment, political parties, trade unions, the army and among religious and traditional leaders.**

**The CEDAW Committee could also engage with civil society and provide it with examples of best practice that have succeeded in altering the situation and improving the rights of women and girls, changing mind sets, starting in the family, so that small boys are taught to respect their mothers and their sisters, and see girls and women as equal partners in the development of their communities and society generally.**

8. What can the Committee do to further strengthen its engagement with other stakeholders and accountability mechanisms at country level, including gender machinery, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), members of parliament, judicial actors, civil society organisations and UN agencies?

**The CEDAW Committee could engage with other treaty bodies and mainstream issues concerning women’s rights in the work it performs, particularly through concluding observations, general recommendations and joint declarations. Committees need to be more open and not work in silos since all the issues addressed in the different treaty bodies are relevant for all populations.**

**At national level, it is necessary to provide training on the principles and follow up of the convention to the different stakeholders and to involve them in all the implementation and follow up processes.**

9. How do you see the CEDAW Committee strengthening the domestic and international environment for:

(a) holding business/private actors responsible for violations under the Convention?

**We must find ways and means to make treaty obligations binding on the private sector also.**

**Some of these could be:**

**• Urging States Parties to introduce legislation to impose equality and outlaw non-discrimination on the grounds of gender which also covers private actors. Such laws should contain rigorous definitions of breaches and administrative sanctioning procedures, as well as the possibility to turn to legal recourse for more serious cases. Private operators who do not respect equality or discriminate, either directly or indirectly, would be subject to these sanctioning procedures.**

**• Establish public procurement regulations which are favourable towards those companies that can demonstrate compliance with the values and rules concerning equality and which ’punish’ those that do not respect them. Include obligatory social clauses and equality plans and ban procurement from companies which cannot demonstrate respect for equality and compliance with the regulations fostering equality.**

**• Introduce fiscal regimes that favour private actors operating in line with equality.**

**• Regulate all public subsidies in order to ban access by companies and actors which do not meet equality standards.**

(b) ensuring accountability of State parties while acting within the broader multilateral system, including the gendered impact of State action or inaction on global economic and financial matters, the climate crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**The CEDAW Committee finds itself in a privileged position to be able to work in partnership with CSW and UN Women to ensure accountability of State parties in relation to gender equality and non-discrimination against women while acting within the broader multilateral system. Another important instrument to ensure accountability is the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which can hold states to account through the voluntary national reviews process, and in particular with respect to SDG No 5 on gender equality and other relevant SDG targets for women and girls.**

**These instruments should pay particular attention on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and girls and on how women and girls are included in recovery measures.**

(c) fortifying international cooperation on these and other urgent global matters?

**Violence against women is one of the most pressing issues of our times, and I feel it is important to strengthen the fight to address it through other regional treaties in place covering violence against women, such as the Organization of American States Belém do Pará Convention and the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention.**

**In fact there is already a forum – the EDVAW Platform (Independent Expert Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence against Women) which can be the focus for efforts to build synergies for this collective struggle. In addition to the CEDAW Committee, the platform is composed of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, the UN Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women and girls, the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention, the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Rapporteur on the Rights of Women.**

10. How do you see the CEDAW Committee and the review process contributing to the delivery of global commitments on gender equality, including under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

**The role of the CEDAW Committee is crucial in ensuring State Parties make general commitments to foster gender equality and, as a result, we are able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals set out within the 2030 Agenda - both goal number 5, which focuses specifically on gender equality, and the rest of the goals which mainstream gender and women’s rights. CEDAW Committee general recommendations and concluding observations for State Parties promote development from a human rights perspective, so State Parties’ development and poverty reduction policies and legislation must consider the rights of women and girls and should include, among others, the principle of gender equality. The 2030 Agenda and CEDAW are two crucial human rights instruments that reinforce one another, so the role of the CEDAW Committee is vital in this respect.**

**In this regard, in December 2019 the CEDAW Committee adopted its “Guidance note for State parties for the preparation of reports under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals”, a document which complements its reporting guidelines.**

11. What role do you see civil society playing in the CEDAW State review process? Do you regularly engage with civil society in your current work? If so, how?

**In my view, civil society plays a pivotal role in the work of the CEDAW Committee. Civil society’s contribution to this work should not only be limited to process of examining State Party reports; it should also be involved in days of general discussion and in other regional consultations the Committee organises to draw up new general recommendations.**

**Civil society also has a key role to play under the CEDAW Optional Protocol, not only in individual communications but also in inquiry procedures.**

**Civil society is also vital in terms of bringing its concerns to the Committee and showcasing good practises in parallel events and briefings.**

**For me, coming from civil society, I am completely convinced of the need to listen to input from the women’s movement in the work of the Committee.**

**I very much regret that the CEDAW Committee does not have a budget or other means to ensure that its public sessions and other events are fully inclusive and accessible.**