

2026 Parallel Report on CEDAW

Contributing NGOs

Awakening Foundation

Taiwan Women's Link

National Alliance of Taiwan Women's Associations

Covenants Watch

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This section responds to the Fifth CEDAW National Report, Article 3, Paragraph 3.1 (strengthening national gender equality mechanisms), with reference to Concluding Observations and Recommendations Nos. 15, 16, 41, and 42 from the Fourth CEDAW Review.

1. In its concluding observations and recommendations, the International Review Committee for the Fourth CEDAW National Report noted in Paragraph 15 that the government has "no effective mechanisms...in place to preview and prevent the adoption of new laws that do not fulfil the requirements under CEDAW." In Paragraph 16, the Committee recommended that "the Legislative Yuan should consider establishing a standing Committee on Women's Human Rights composed of legislators or a similar mechanism to review legislative proposals in order to ensure that they fulfil the requirements under CEDAW." The Committee further recommended in Paragraph 42 that "elected women legislators consider forming a cross-party Women's Caucus in the Legislative Yuan to initiate and enhance the passage of CEDAW-adapted legislation and gender equality policies in diverse areas."
2. In December 2025, the Awakening Foundation convened a focus group forum with representatives from non-governmental organizations, scholars, and experts to discuss the Legislative Yuan's current implementation of CEDAW, the institutional and systemic obstacles it faces in doing so, and the feasibility of establishing the aforementioned cross-party mechanism. The following observations emerged from the discussion:
 - a. Taiwan's political system is not a parliamentary one, meaning the elected legislature (i.e., the Legislative Yuan) has limited capacity and institutional leverage to oversee the executive branch, where policy implementation power is largely concentrated. Furthermore, the Legislative Yuan lacks dedicated research capacity, and there is no ministry responsible for women's rights or gender equality. As a result, CEDAW implementation has long been handled internally by executive agencies, leaving a significant gap in the Legislative Yuan's ability to exercise oversight.
 - b. The reports and gender and human rights impact assessments compiled by the Organic Laws and Statutes Bureau and the Budget Center of the Legislative Yuan have had limited substantive impact on legislation.
 - i. The gender and human rights assessments produced before bills enter formal legislative review are at risk of becoming a mere

formality. It appears that legislators and their aides rarely reference assessment data from the Legislative Yuan's Organic Laws and Statutes Bureau or Budget Center when proposing legislation, amendments, or budget oversight measures.

- ii. The assessment reports produced by the Organic Laws and Statutes Bureau tend to focus narrowly on policy issues or bills that are already receiving government attention or public scrutiny, rather than proactively identifying gaps in CEDAW compliance. Individual staff members select research topics at their own discretion, and this work does not cover all bills that have entered the legislative process, nor does it encompass all major priority bills of the Executive Yuan or the various political parties.
 - iii. The reports from the Organic Laws and Statutes Bureau and the Budget Center typically do not review proposals put forward by legislators themselves, nor do they offer negative evaluations of any proposals under consideration.
 - iv. The gender analysis reports and compiled data submitted by the Organic Laws and Statutes Bureau and the Budget Center to the Legislative Yuan's Gender Equality Committee (see 2.c) are all post-hoc analyses, conducted after legislation has already been passed or budgets approved, rather than pre-emptive reviews conducted early in the legislative process to assess whether proposed bills or budgets meet CEDAW requirements.
- c. The existing Gender Equality Committee in the Legislative Yuan functions merely as an internal ad hoc consultative body within the Legislative Yuan itself. Despite the fact that legislators from various parties are nominated by their respective party caucuses to serve on the committee, there is no guarantee that these members are genuinely committed to women's human rights issues or possess substantive expertise in women's human rights or gender equality. Without such commitment or expertise among its members, the Gender Equality Committee risks being a committee in name only.
 - d. According to the current guidelines for the establishment of the Legislative Yuan's [Gender Equality Committee](#), the Committee deliberates on and provides advisory opinions or suggestions on the following matters: promotion and dissemination of gender equality policies, regulations, and principles; planning of gender equality initiatives and administrative measures; promotion and implementation of gender equality training and gender mainstreaming efforts; handling of gender impact assessment reviews for bills and budgets; and other matters related to advancing gender equality. In practice, the Legislative Yuan's Gender Equality Committee functions as an internal administrative mechanism for gender equality within

the Legislative Yuan, rather than a mechanism for integrating gender equality into legislative decision-making, and it does not possess substantive legislative authority.

- e. [The Legislative Yuan's 2023 response](#) to issues and questions identified in the fourth CEDAW report mentioned the existence of a "[Taiwan Parliamentary Human Rights Commission](#)." In reality, this is a cross-party body of legislators focused on international human rights exchange and networking. It does not have the authority to review proposed legislation or prevent the passage of laws that fail to meet the requirements of CEDAW or other international human rights conventions.
- f. Taiwan's central government operates under a five-branch system. Standing committees of the Legislative Yuan are organized by policy area and typically review legislation and budgets falling under the jurisdiction of related ministries or agencies in the Executive Yuan. However, as Taiwan does not have a dedicated agency such as a Ministry of Gender Equality or Ministry of Women's Rights, gender equality matters are handled by the Department of Gender Equality within the Executive Yuan headquarters, which is an internal unit without an independent budget rather than a standalone administrative agency. The absence of a dedicated gender equality ministry makes it difficult to establish a corresponding standing committee for gender equality or women's rights in the Legislative Yuan.
- g. Based on the above observations, and considering that the Taiwanese government has already incorporated five UN human rights conventions into its domestic legal framework—the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)—and has also ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), we propose the following policy recommendations:
 - i. The Organic Law of the Legislative Yuan should be amended to establish an ad hoc committee for the oversight of international human rights conventions. This committee should be granted explicit authority to monitor and supervise the implementation of concluding observations and recommendations issued by expert review bodies across all relevant government departments.
 - ii. When concluding observations or recommendations pertain to laws or policies under the jurisdiction of a specific ministry—for example, the establishment of public childcare services, which involves the Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Ministry of Education—the

aforementioned proposed ad hoc committee should have the authority to convene joint meetings with the corresponding standing committee (such as the Social Welfare and Environmental Hygiene Committee) to ensure implementation and oversight of the relevant human rights convention obligations.

- h. The above recommendation to establish a new ad hoc committee for the oversight of international human rights conventions takes into account the following factors:
 - i. There is existing precedent within the Legislative Yuan for establishing the proposed committee. Under the current structure, in addition to standing committees, there are also ad hoc committees, such as the Procedure Committee, the Discipline Committee, the Constitution Amendment Committee, and the Expenditure Examination Committee. The Organic Law of the Legislative Yuan clearly defines each committee's specific mandate, and these committees convene meetings as needed to fulfill their designated functions. An international human rights convention oversight committee could be established following this same model.
 - ii. This committee should be granted the authority to convene joint meetings with relevant standing committees (such as the Internal Administration Committee). This would change the current situation in which only executive agencies are responsible for tracking CEDAW implementation, transforming the Legislative Yuan and its legislators from bystanders into active participants.
 - iii. The authority of this committee should extend to overseeing the implementation of all international conventions with domestic legal force, including not only CEDAW but also the CRC, CRPD, and other conventions. This would enable coalition-building with human rights, disability, and children's rights organizations, expanding civil society mobilization capacity. It would also facilitate attention to intersectional issues that span multiple conventions, thereby advancing the inclusive representation in decision-making emphasized in CEDAW General Recommendation No. 40.