

Candidate of Peru to the
Committee on the Elimination
of Discrimination against
Women 2015-2018

GLADYS ACOSTA VARGAS

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I. Presentation of the candidature

Since the ratification of The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in September 1982, Peru has consistently backed the global agenda for gender equality as an integral part of human development. Substantial achievements at the national level toward greater equality between women and men have been the progressive result of the Peruvian State efforts to comply with international standards and to embrace the high level consensus on protection and guaranteeing the rights of women, all as agreed upon by the international community at the IV World Conference on Women in 1995.

As a result of its commitment to an agenda of social inclusion as reflected in the public policies designed to enhance the welfare of all of its citizens along with the conviction to promote a sustainable and comprehensive development for the Peruvian people, the Government of Peru presents its candidature to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women for the 2015-2018 period.

Peru's nomination for the first time in the history of the Committee demonstrates the country's resolute commitment to this international body. CEDAW is considered the Magna Carta of Women since it guarantees the human rights and fundamental liberties of all those who at the global level still experience multiple situations of discrimination and rights violations.

As State party to the Convention, Peru hereby nominates one of its outstanding professionals who has a distinguished record of international experience, accumulated expertise and commitment to the agenda of rights for women and girls. The Peruvian government is confident that she will make an outstanding contribution to strengthening the mandate of the Convention and monitoring progress of States parties with its provisions.

II. Profile and career of the candidate

Gladys Gladys Acosta Vargas is largely committed to the advancement of equal rights for women and men in all corners of the world and in all spheres of cultural, social, economic and political life. She completed her Bachelors and Master's degree studies in Sociology at the Sorbonne, France and graduated as a lawyer at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. Her international experience has been developed through the relentless progress of global legislation. She has served on working groups with international non-governmental organizations with whom she has closely cooperated on advocacy for better instruments for defending the rights of women. She was particularly active in developing arguments in favour of the recognition of women's rights as human rights as well as working in support of the creation of the Special Rapporteur of the UN on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, during the Second World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. Her relationships with women from all latitudes became further consolidated during the preparatory phases for the IV World Conference on Women (Beijing) in 1995 which she attended as part of non-governmental delegations.

Through her commitment to assuring the rights of all people, she has been an active researcher and advisor for the development of national public policies aimed at consolidating women's political and economic autonomy, inspired by the principles of international law that guarantee the protection of human rights. She has participated in numerous initiatives to confront gender violence in all of its manifestations, the most recent of which includes working in the capacity of Chief of the Latin American and Caribbean Section of UNWOMEN to support the Secretary General's Campaign to End Violence against Women.

Her significant concern over more than a decade of service in UNICEF, first as the Regional Gender Equality Advisor for Latin America and the Caribbean, and later as Representative in Guatemala and in Argentina, has been the coherent and substantive integration of the mandates of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention for the Rights of the Child as the guiding principles for large scale institutional changes in national legislation and public policies. Her career in UNICEF within the Regional Office for Latin America and the

Caribbean, and later in UNWOMEN, have provided countless opportunities for training servants at diverse levels of state authority and for directly exchanging experiences with virtually all of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, including at critical moments such as the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, when women demonstrated their extraordinary abilities for community leadership and overcome their grief and calamities they endured at home.

Her fluency in various languages (Spanish, French, English and Portuguese) has proven to be a great asset for becoming acquainted in the field with the problems and capacities of women in all continents. For example, she has worked in close contact with non-governmental sectors in France in support of UNICEF work. She believes that direct dialogue with women's organizations, State institutions and non-governmental agencies provides the basis for the most significant and enduring social transformations. In UNICEF, she participated in countless experiences of consultation with girls, boys, and adolescents of both sexes because she believes that finding adequate solutions for putting rights within people's reach on an everyday basis cannot be accomplished without listening to their own voices in every phase of life and in their own setting. Nevertheless, it is the voice of girls which most needs to be heard because from birth they live with a deeply unjust discrimination.

Working with a profoundly democratic conviction, she believes that access to justice is one of the most important aspects of the lives of people and considers that the specialization of law, although necessary, must not leave aside the most central concern, namely, the deep respect for human dignity. This knowledge has been gleaned out of initiatives related to the active modernization of the curriculum structure of Law Schools, to her own teaching experience in universities, and by sensitising the larger public through work with the mass media both within and beyond Latin America and the Caribbean that formed a key part of her service as UNICEF country representative and later for UNWOMEN.

She considers that international law has a pending debt with indigenous women in all of their global diversity and who she has come to know well over the course of decades of struggle for their fundamental rights. For this reason, she feels honoured to be asked to serve on the CEDAW Committee and contribute to a General Recommendation that consolidates the rights of indigenous women, broadly recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and for all subsequent international instruments of the United Nations System of Human Rights.

Lastly, she considers that much has been already accomplished in the way of the protection of rights of women and girls, but there is still a long way to go before the International Human Rights Treaties have real and definitive impact on the life of all peoples.

III. Proposed work of the candidate to the Committee

1. Consolidate the Committee's capacity for interpreting the contents of the Convention through the elaboration of new General Recommendations. This candidature proposes to develop a General Recommendation on the right of equality and non-discrimination of indigenous women, taking as its foundation broad based consultations, reports of the States submitted to the Committee, and approaches developed by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The General Recommendation should interpret the contents of the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and ILO Convention No. 169 regarding Tribal and Indigenous Populations (1989) as international standards to produce a coherent application agreed upon articles of CEDAW with the aim of guaranteeing the rights of women belonging to indigenous peoples worldwide.
2. Promote greater sensitivity at the global level for compliance with the rights of girls and female adolescents, working in close coordination with the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
3. Promote a constructive dialogue of the Committee with State Parties with the aim of creating a more simplified procedure of the reports and an effective, interactive process of follow-up, thus facilitating greater compliance with the mandates of the Convention.
4. Improve the process of introducing efficient mechanisms that are well synchronized and transparent in their coordination and synergy with all other Treaty agencies, the Human Rights Council, and other UN agencies, with emphasis on the Special Rapporteurs, and above all, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences.

5. Produce substantive analyses with respect to the evolution of the concepts and practices of equality and non-discrimination applied in the State Parties so as to accelerate the elimination of norms, policies and other actions or omissions that result in discriminatory situations identified in the various provisions of the Convention. Emphasis should be on coordination with the Working Group on laws and discriminatory practices against women in view of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, prioritizing compliance with the deadline for evaluating the Millennium Goals (particularly Goal 3) and after two decades of conducting the IV World Conference on Women in Beijing.

IV. Curriculum Vitae

4.1 Degrees:

- 1983 - 1988 Law Degree. Faculty of Law at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.
- 1972 - 1973 Master's Degree in Sociology. Human Sciences of Rene Descartes, Academy of Paris, Sorbonne, France.
- 1970 - 1972 Sociology Degree. Human Sciences of Rene Descartes, Academy of Paris, Sorbonne, France.

4.2 Professional experience

- 2013 UNICEF Representative a.i in Colombia.
UN Women Representative a.i in Ecuador
- 2008 - 2011 UN Women - Chief, Latin America and the Caribbean Section
- 2006 - 2008 UNICEF Resident Representative in Argentina.
- 2002 - 2006 UNICEF Resident Representative in Guatemala.
- 1999 - 2002 Regional Advisor, Women and Gender Equity in UNICEF - Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office.
- 1996 - 1999 International Consultant, UNIFEM, UNICEF, Interamerican Institute of Human Rights (IIDH), United

Nations' Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of the Delinquent (ILANUD), Project Counselling Services for Latin American Refugees, NOVIB (Dutch International Cooperation), International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development (Quebec, Canadá), Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), Women's Human Rights Net (WHRNet).

- 1996 Investigator of the Evaluation Team on Relations between the State and NGOs in the process of preparing the 1995 Beijing Conference. Sponsored by UNIFEM Andean Region and UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 1994 - 1995 Legal investigator of the Report on Domestic Violence, Latin American and Caribbean Region, under the charge of Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women before the United Nations Commission of Human Rights. The Institute of Women, Law and Development, Washington, DC.
- 1993 - 1995 Visiting Professor, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia. Seminar on "Woman, Family and Law," Graduate program in Family Studies, and "Woman, Society and Law", Political Sciences and Law Faculty.
- 1992 - 1996 Program Director, Gender and Power Project, Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales Alternativos (ILSA), Bogotá, Colombia.
- 1990 - 1992 Director General del Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán, Peru.

4.2 Academic activity

Selected publications

Books:

- Para que los derechos no nos sean ajenos. Serie Mujer y Derechos Humanos 4. Manuela Ramos, UNIFEM, Lima, Perú, 1998.
- La Mujer en los Códigos Penales de América Latina y el Caribe Hispano. UNIFEM/ UNICEF, Quito, Ecuador, 1996.

- *Derechos de las Mujeres. Tres Ensayos. Centro de la Mujer Peruana «Flora Tristán.»* Editorial Flora Tristán, Lima, Perú, 1990.

Articles:

“Le Droit International des Enfants et des Femmes. Une évolution historique et sociale”. UNICEF. Universidad de Bordeaux, Francia. Actes des colloques 2003-2004.

“L’UNICEF et le retablissement de la paix en Amerique Latine et au Guatemala après 30 ans de guerre”. *Rencontres, Université Montesquieu –Bordeaux IV- UNICEF. Actes des colloques 2003-2004.*

“Cambios legislativos en la formación y disolución de familias: una mirada de contexto”. *Familias y políticas públicas en América Latina. Naciones Unidas. Santiago de Chile, 2007.*

“Vía Crucis de la Muerte Materna”. *Mortalidad Materna: Un problema de Derechos Humanos. UNICEF. Ministerio de Salud. Argentina, 2003.*

“La Convención sobre la Eliminación de todas las formas de Discriminación contra la Mujer y la Convención sobre los Derechos de la Niñez: Derechos Humanos constructores de ciudadanía y democracia. Serie Documentos de Trabajo. Número 5. UNICEF – México. Noviembre, 2001.

“De la reivindicación a la propuesta. Pasos adelante en la conquista de la dignidad. Seguimiento a la Plataforma de Acción: Colombia, in *Las Apuestas Inconclusas. El movimiento de mujeres y la IV Conferencia Mundial sobre la Mujer. Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán. UNIFEM. Lima, 2000.*

“Conceptualizing the Law from a Gender Perspective: Conceptions Regarding Victim and Accused,” in *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy and the Law, Volume 7, Number 2, Washington, DC., 1999.*

“The Colombian Case in the Andean Context” in *Roads to Beijing. Fourth World Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Edited by Virginia Vargas. UNICEF, UNIFEM, Ediciones Flora Tristán. Lima, 1998.*

“Una luz al final del túnel: la justicia de género” in *Derechos Humanos de la Mujer. Perspectivas Nacionales e Internacionales. Edited by Rebecca J. Cook. PROFAMILIA. Bogotá, Colombia, 1996.*

«Los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres en las Conferencias Mundiales de las Naciones Unidas,» in *Diversidad en Beijing. Una experiencia de participación. Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos y Comunidad Europea, edited by Gilda Pacheco, San Jose, Costa Rica. Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos, European Community, 1996.*

«Evolución de los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres,» in *La Institución Policial y los Derechos Humanos de las Mujeres, UNIFEM, Ecuador, 1995.*

«Violencia Contra la Mujer: Tratamiento Jurídico Internacional,» in *De Nairobi a Beijing. Diagnosticos y Propuestas, ISIS Internacional, Ediciones de las Mujeres #21, December, 1994, Santiago, Chile.*



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