

REALIZE CEDAW

ORAL STATEMENT OF CEDAW ALLIANCE GERMANY

To the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 85th session
Review of Germany (May 8th 2023)

The spoken word shall be binding.

Thank you, Madame Chair. I am speaking on behalf of the CEDAW Alliance Germany, a network of more than 30 organizations. Let me explicate some examples for what is lacking in our view to fully implement CEDAW in Germany:

First, CEDAW has to be implemented for each and every woman! We miss a comprehensive understanding of intersectionality and multiple forms of discrimination in equality policy.

Second, there is still no comprehensive strategy (i.e. gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting) and a lack of institutions to implement CEDAW and reach gender equality at national, federal and municipal level. Meaningful institutions like the Women's and equality commissioners are limited by the varying framework conditions under which they operate.

Third, Women still do not have the same opportunities as men to secure their own livelihood and economic independence. They still do the vast majority of unpaid care and domestic work. The structural conditions for women to participate in paid work and for men to assume responsibility for care must finally be created.

Contrary to CEDAW's recommendation 50(d) from 2017 on women divorced in the GDR, the federal government has enacted a "hardship fund" which is underfinanced and excludes 95 percent of the affected. Their association and the CEDAW Alliance Germany call to provide justice and set-up a CEDAW conform, adequate compensation scheme by supplementing the pensions of these women in recognition of their life employment period of up to 40 years.

Fourth, there is neither an effective intersectional and interministerial strategy for preventing and combating violence against women and girls, nor a comprehensive network of specialized assistance services for women affected by violence. There is no national strategy to fight FGM/C or human trafficking.

Fifth, maternity care must respect women's dignity and ability to give birth. Too often, women experience obstetric violence, sub-standard care, too many interventions like inductions, C-sections, episiotomies. Women's lawful rights, like the choice of place of birth and midwifery care, must be respected. Also, far too little action is being taken to combat climate change and its effects on women's health.

Lastly, the digital transformation is not gender-neutral: young women in particular are being increasingly exposed to gender-specific cyber-violence, and algorithms are often designed discriminatory. We ask the CEDAW Committee to add to its list of general recommendations another on the digital transformation and its potential for discrimination.