



Ann Fenner
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Our Reference: 202000111023

Your Reference: CEDAW: UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

30 November 2020

Dear Ann Fenner ,

Thanks for your email dated 31 October 2020 to the First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP, which outlined the vision and aims of the CEDAW People's Tribunal. As the First Minister receives a great deal of correspondence, it is unfortunately not always possible for her to reply directly. However, I am replying on the First Minister's behalf as an official in Equality and Human Rights Division supporting the National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership

As Scotland's national government we welcome scrutiny of our human rights record and wish to make abundantly clear that we are very supportive of the CEDAW People's Tribunal aims of eradicating stereotyped roles for women and men, ensuring equal participation in public life and before the law, and eliminating discrimination in employment. Our ambition is for Scotland to be at the forefront of championing gender equality so that women and girls grow up with equal opportunities in a truly equal society.

The Scottish Government has a responsibility to set standards and to demonstrate leadership. Others cannot be expected to follow if we are not prepared to show the way. Therefore, we hope that the [Scottish Government's Programme for Government for 2020 – 21](#) will reassure you that the Scottish Government is fully committed in its work to ensure gender equality. It sets out a clear commitment to explore how best to incorporate the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) into domestic legislation, which will ensure the Scottish Government continues to act robustly to eradicate gender inequality and eliminate all discrimination

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against women and girls.

In addition, the First Minister accepted the recommendations of the [National Advisory Council on Women and Girls](#), which includes incorporation of CEDAW into Scots law, and the [Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership](#) recommended that a wide range of human rights be included in a new statutory framework for human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights and further specific rights, including rights belonging to women. Consequently, [the National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership](#) was established in late 2019 and is working at pace to deliver a radical blueprint for human rights legislation covering all areas of devolved responsibility, with its recommendations expected next year. The Taskforce work includes consideration of how best to incorporate CEDAW into domestic legislation.

As the Taskforce's work has progressed, Covid-19 has served to highlight structural inequalities affecting particular groups, including women. This further drives us to deliver this important commitment at pace, ensuring we listen and learn from key women's rights stakeholder groups to determine how best to incorporate CEDAW quickly, but also as effectively as possible. Discussions with key stakeholders have come in the form of roundtables, but will also be guided by an expert CEDAW Incorporation Group which has recently been established and will explore topics such as capacity-building and implementation. These discussions will feed into the Taskforce's considerations, and help inform how incorporation will make a significant and positive practical difference to the everyday lives of women in Scotland.

Our fundamental commitment is to respect, protect and fulfil human rights for people living in Scotland. This will be at the heart of the decision on how to incorporate CEDAW into Scots Law.

Yours sincerely

Fraser Meechan
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