

What is CEDAW and Why Should We Care?

CEDAW is a UN Convention (treaty) on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. CEDAW was adopted by General Assembly of the UN in 1979 by 130 yeas, no nays, and 1 abstention. The United States helped to draft the Treaty, and President Carter was among the leaders who signed the convention on 17 July, 1980 at the Copenhagen World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women.

As of today, 186 nations have ratified the Convention. Only **Iran, Somalia, Sudan**, the **UNITED STATES** and 3 island nations Nauru, Palau and Tonga have NOT ratified it.

The United States is the **ONLY** Zonta country that has NOT ratified it.

How does US failure to ratify CEDAW affect advocates for women's Human Rights in other nations?

How does US failure to ratify CEDAW affect America's image as a promoter of Human Rights for women? How has our failure to ratify hindered women's efforts to get CEDAW reforms implemented in their countries?

How has CEDAW helped women in nations that have ratified the Convention?

US Ratification of CEDAW by DECEMBER, 2009 is a MAJOR priority of Zonta International.

What can we do to get the U.S. Senate to ratify this important treaty?

We must begin by becoming informed about CEDAW. Step #1: Read the documents on CEDAW, Step #2. Ask questions and seek answers from our committee; Step #3. Vote for the CEDAW Resolution in the fall, Step #4. Participate in our ratification effort.

International and local service projects alone will not bring a full measure of equality or human rights to women.

Advocacy is also essential to change laws, and provide guarantees of human rights for women and girls.

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