

This Judicial Colloquium, supported by Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, was designed to support members of the judiciary in raising knowledge and awareness of CEDAW and promote gender equity and the dismantling of the barriers women face in accessing justice. "The rule of law and an impartial, well-trained and trusted judiciary is an essential component of just societies."<sup>10</sup> Members of the judiciary can help shape the legal environment and indeed the legal and judicial culture in their respective countries within SEA. The Colloquium brought together judges from the Supreme Court or High Court justices and lower court judges who have either rendered decisions applying CEDAW principles or whose mandate includes deciding cases that have a direct impact on women's human rights (e.g., judges of Juvenile and Family Courts). Representatives of judicial training institutes from the eight countries participating in CEDAW SEAP were also present in the forum. Legal experts also participated in order to share their expertise on CEDAW and international human rights law. Civil society representatives involved in litigating cases directly related to women's human rights also participated to share their perspectives on key considerations for the judiciary for each of the topics discussed in the Colloquium.<sup>11</sup>

This is a summary of the proceedings of the Judicial Colloquium and a synthesis of the key points raised at the meeting. It draws from all of the presentations and relevant points made during the open forum. Rather than follow the chronology of the programme, related topics are clustered into various chapters to facilitate a more cohesive understanding of the numerous issues discussed in the different sessions. This summary is intended to serve as a resource or reference for judges to engender every aspect of the legal system and improve women's access to justice.

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10. Opening Remarks, H.E. Philip Calvert, Ambassador of Canada, 4 September 2013

11. UN Women, 'Concept Note' 4-5 September, 2013