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Convention on the elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW): A new commentary— Why now and for what purpose?

Wednesday 7 December 2011 1–2pm

Dr Marsha Freeman University of Minnesota Human Rights Centre

Moot Court ANU College of Law, Building 5, Fellows Road,
The Australian National University



Marsha A. Freeman is Director of the International Women's Rights Action Watch and a Senior Fellow at the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center. IWRAP is an international women's human rights resource center that provides information, training and technical assistance to activists, scholars, UN experts and government officials concerned with implementing women's human rights through use of the international human rights treaties and procedures. IWRAP pioneered the shadow reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and now works with all the human rights treaties to promote women's human rights. She has worked with NGOs all over the world in training, technical assistance, workshops and conferences, and facilitated the participation of twenty-five NGOs at the 1994 African preparatory conference for the Fourth World Conference on Women and the participation of a similar group at the 1995 Beijing Conference.

IWRAP is working with other American NGOs to promote US ratification of the CEDAW Convention and has given a number of workshops on Convention in the US. She is the primary editor of the *CEDAW Commentary*, to be published by Oxford University Press.

Dr Freeman teaches a seminar in women's human rights at the University of Minnesota Law School. She holds a law degree from the University of Minnesota and a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania.

The forthcoming CEDAW Commentary is an account of the Committee's work in establishing the Convention as a truly global norm for addressing discrimination against women. Looking at the record through 2010, the Commentary's thirteen authors document the Committee's development of the concept of substantive equality as the fundamental standard for evaluating States parties' implementation. The Commentary also includes the first full analysis of the Optional Protocol in action.

Dr Freeman will discuss the somewhat unusual organization of the Commentary's production and its potential to inform advocacy as well as further developments in discrimination law and policy.

The views expressed in this seminar are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the views of The Australian National University.

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E rsvp@law.anu.edu.au T 02 6125 1096
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