

**Feminist Legal Clinic Inc.**

PO Box 273, Summer Hill NSW 2130

Mobile: 0402 467 476

[www.feministlegal.org](http://www.feministlegal.org)

ABN: 17 360 484 300

CEDAW Committee

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

30 January 2025

Submitted online

**Submission for Half-day of general discussion on gender stereotypes  
CEDAW GR 41 Gender Stereotypes**

Feminist Legal Clinic Inc. is a community legal service based in Sydney that works to advance the human rights of women and girls. Our casework and advocacy are specifically focused on defending women from male violence and human rights abuses.

We endorse the submission of the Women's Declaration International made on 6 December 2024 where they call for a return to the original terminology of 'sex stereotypes.'

In the current environment where there is increasing conflation of biological 'sex' with socially constructed 'gender', it is essential that the CEDAW Committee uses accurate terminology. We note the useful distinction between the terms 'sex' and 'gender' set out in paragraph 5 of the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation 28:

*The term "sex" here refers to biological differences between men and women. The term "gender" refers to socially constructed identities, attributes and roles for women and men and society's social and cultural meaning for these biological differences resulting in hierarchical relationships between women and men and in the distribution of power and rights favouring men and disadvantaging women.*

Although historically, there has been a tendency to sometimes use the word 'gender' as a polite euphemism for the word 'sex', in view of the confusion this has created we urge the CEDAW Committee to observe and demarcate the distinction more clearly and dispense with the use of the term 'gender'.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Anna Kerr

Principal Solicitor

Feminist Legal Clinic Inc.

*Organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2023.*