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Summary record of the 15th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 9 May 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Pillay

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports

(a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant *(continued)*

Combined initial and second and third periodic reports of Ethiopia (E/C.12/ETH/1-3; HRI/CORE/ETH/2008; E/C.12/ETH/Q/1-3 and Add.1 – English only)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Ethiopia took places at the Committee table.*
2. **The Chairperson** welcomed the delegation of Ethiopia and invited it to present the State party's combined initial, second and third periodic reports.
3. **Mr. Yimer** (Ethiopia), recalling that Ethiopia had ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1993, said that the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia of 1995, in which all the main human rights and fundamental freedoms were enshrined, had a section devoted to economic, social and cultural rights. As stipulated in article 2 of the Covenant, the Government had, to the maximum of its available resources, taken decisive measures to lay down legal frameworks and to craft national policies and action plans for the enjoyment, protection and promotion of human rights.
4. In order to foster the country's economic development, strengthen judicial and democratic institutions and create conditions in which democracy and good governance could thrive — which were necessary for the exercise of human rights — the Government had put in place an ambitious Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan (2011–2015). The objectives were the eradication of poverty, and sustainable, accelerated, broad-based, people-centred and rights-based economic growth and social development.
5. Thanks to people-centred development policies with a particular focus on those most disadvantaged, the country had made remarkable progress in poverty reduction, education, health care and employment. According to the 2010–2011 household income, consumption and expenditure survey, the national poverty headcount rate had declined from 38.7 per cent to 29.6 per cent between 2004–2005 and 2010–2011, and from 39.3 per cent to 30.4 per cent in rural areas, while the inequality gap had dropped by 6.2 per cent in urban areas, demonstrating that Ethiopia was on the right track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and halve poverty by 2015.
6. In order to support growth, the Government needed to develop infrastructure and had therefore to build different infrastructure such as roads, education, health, water development, and power generation. The emphasis of agricultural policies and development plans was on eradicating poverty. A national development plan on food security had been designed with a view to finding a sustainable solution. To that end, the Government granted loans to rural inhabitants facing serious food shortages and resettled families to fertile areas on a voluntary basis.
7. The Constitution guaranteed the right to social security and imposed the obligation on the State, within its available means, to provide rehabilitation and assistance to persons with disabilities, older persons, and children without parents or guardians. The House of Peoples' Representatives had enacted several relevant laws. The Government had taken tangible and effective measures to boost the participation of women in political, social and economic affairs, increase the enrolment of young girls in higher education and reduce the dropout rate among girls at all levels of education. It had also taken legal and policy measures to curb harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and early

or forced marriage. The Constitution and other laws guaranteed non-discrimination of women in matters of employment and wages. Legislation had been enacted to guarantee equal enjoyment of rights between men and women in matters of property, inheritance and control over resources, including land, when entering into, during, or upon dissolution of, a marriage. The Government had also established various statutory and institutional standards to protect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups such as children, orphans, and persons living with HIV/AIDS and to ensure that they were taken into consideration in employment, education and health policy. Rehabilitation, reintegration and protection measures had been put in place for children, youths and mothers living on the streets, in collaboration with NGOs. Thanks to a family reunification initiative, 16,100 street children had returned to their families and been enrolled in school.

8. There were more than 80 nations, nationalities and peoples in Ethiopia, each of which had the constitutional right to speak, write and develop its own language, to express and develop its culture and to preserve its history. The diversity of the national heritage, including nine sites on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List, contributed to the country's revitalization and sustainable development endeavours. The number of tourists attracted by the wealth of Ethiopia's cultural and historic heritage was growing and the Government hoped to make the country one of the main tourist destinations in Africa by the end of the Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan.

9. However, in a country still burdened with poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, drought, poor national capacity, and backward traditional practices, international cooperation and partnerships were essential to the realization of numerous rights enshrined in the Covenant.

10. **Ms. Cong** (Country Rapporteur) lamented the late submission of the State party's replies to the list of issues and the absence of representatives of ministries with mandates related to matters covered by the Covenant. She acknowledged the priority the State party gave to poverty reduction, and its efforts to channel the proceeds of economic growth towards that goal. She also welcomed the inclusion of economic, social and cultural rights in the Constitution, as well as the reform of the Criminal Code, criminalizing harmful traditional practices and trafficking in persons, and of the Family Code, which set the legal marriage age at 18 for women and men alike.

11. She nevertheless pointed out that food insecurity in the State party remained among the highest in the world, with 39.3 per cent of the population living below the poverty line in 2004–2005; that discrimination against women continued to be an issue; that regional disparities in nutrition and in health, education and other services persisted; and that it was difficult for the population to exercise its economic, social and cultural rights, for lack of implementation policies and programmes.

12. She would like to know what measures the State party was taking to declare the customary and religious laws in force in the regions unconstitutional, and whether the State party provided human rights training for all echelons of Government, the civil service and, more specifically, to legislators, judges, the police and the armed forces. Lastly, how did the State party guarantee that the regulations governing civil society neither limited the independence nor hindered the country's operations of human rights institutions.

Articles 1 to 5

13. **Mr. Ribeiro Leão** asked whether both poverty reduction strategies, namely the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme and the Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty, had been formulated in the light of the cross-cutting nature of human rights and the principle of non-discrimination. What had their main

outcomes been, and were the strategies linked to other development plans, such as the current Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan?

14. **Ms. Shin** expressed regret at the significant delay in submitting the initial and periodic reports. Following up on Ms. Cong's question about training of the judiciary, she specifically wished to know whether sharia judges were also trained.

15. Given that the Charities and Societies Proclamation (No. 621/2009) prevented certain civil society organizations from receiving more than 10 per cent of their funding from foreign donors and that a number of treaty bodies had already recommended that the State party amend the law and unblock funds belonging to NGOs, what measures had been taken to follow up on those recommendations?

16. She wondered whether it was true that, under the voluntary "villagization" programme, the authorities simply ordered individuals, usually from marginalized ethnic groups prone to discrimination, to resettle in areas without education, health and other infrastructure. Pointing out that forcing people to resettle without prior consultation or compensation violated the Covenant, she wished to know how the State party justified such actions.

17. As to women's rights, she requested specific statistics to support the delegation's claims of progress. Lastly, what measures was the State party taking to inform women and girls of their rights and enable them to file complaints and apply to the courts?

18. **Mr. Atangana**, broaching the issue of the independence of the judiciary, which the Committee against Torture had already raised in its concluding observations (CAT/C/ETH/CO/1, para. 22), asked what steps the State party had taken to remedy the situation.

19. Since the Constitution stipulated that international instruments were part of domestic legislation and could therefore be invoked by the courts, he would like to know whether the Covenant rights had ever been invoked, whether there was any relevant case law and whether the delegation could provide statistics on any such cases.

20. **Mr. Sadi** asked why there had been such a delay in submitting the initial and periodic reports. He wished to know how familiar policymakers were with the Covenant and applied it in their work and how much its provisions were faithfully reflected in the rights enshrined in the Constitution. Given the sheer size of the country and its division into nine quasi-independent regional governments, how did the federal authorities oversee implementation of the Covenant? He would be interested in concrete examples of the decisive measures taken to promote the Covenant rights.

21. He very much regretted that the national human rights institution did not comply with the Paris Principles, as compliance would make the Ethiopian institution a crucial player and enable it to lend considerable support to the Government in fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant.

22. He enquired about human rights education in the State party: the level at which it entered the curriculum; course content; and the place assigned to multilingualism. Also, was the foreign assistance Ethiopia received contingent upon observance of certain rights? If so, the delegation might provide relevant examples.

23. **Mr. Kedzia** asked about the main targets of the poverty reduction strategy to be achieved by 2015; the importance given to human rights norms, especially those relating to economic, social and cultural rights; and chances of adopting a rights-based approach.

24. Noting that Ethiopia had as yet failed to ratify any of the treaty body communication procedures under treaty law he wondered whether that was a political strategy. He would be interested to learn whether the State party intended to extend a standing invitation to the

special procedures mandate holders for economic, social and cultural rights, and why the State party had decided, as stated in its replies to the list of issues, not to amend the Criminal Code in order to decriminalize homosexuality.

25. Given the State party's assertion that it was possible to challenge the decision of a sharia court before an ordinary court, the Institution of the Ombudsman or the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, he requested examples of the application of that procedure. He also requested statistical data demonstrating progress in the area of harmful traditional practices and their effect on HIV-transmission.

26. **Mr. Abashidze** drew attention to the apparent contradictions in the Constitution, some articles of which, including article 41 on economic, social and cultural rights, applied only to Ethiopian citizens, whereas others, such as article 25 regarding discrimination, applied to everyone. Did foreign nationals residing legally in Ethiopia enjoy full economic, social and cultural rights?

27. **Mr. Riedel** asked the delegation to provide a written summary of the State party's replies to the list of issues, and to comment on allegations of involuntary displacements and resettlements in areas of armed conflict, including in the Somali National Regional State, which appeared to target mainly nomadic populations, and that the Government did not cooperate fully in conflict zones. He proposed that in its next periodic report the State party should include disaggregated data along with time frames for each of its replies to the list of issues so that the Committee could assess progress on the basis of the criteria established by article 2 of the Covenant.

28. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** asked the delegation for more detailed information on the effect of the global economic crisis on donor contributions, especially in relation to infrastructure projects and the food situation.

29. **Mr. Getahun** (Ethiopia) explained that the replies to the list of issues had been submitted late because the level of detail requested entailed consultations with various Government institutions and ministries. Similarly, the periodic report had been submitted late because Ethiopia, having ratified almost all the international human rights instruments, including regional instruments, gathering data in all the regions was an onerous task for which it lacked technical expertise and resources. In order to rectify the situation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had drafted a concept paper on the matter with a view to setting up a sustainable reporting system. In collaboration with the East Africa Regional Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Addis Ababa, the Government had established a national steering committee to implement a project for submission of all reports pending, including those under the universal periodic review, as well as a national committee and a drafting committee. The Government had also requested the involvement of all federal and regional institutions and had held two national conferences on the issue, making it possible to assess the level of knowledge of the Covenant. The delegation hoped to be able to submit the next report to the Committee on time and in the detail required.

30. As to individual communications, the Government did not oppose the procedure, but the process imposed by the United Nations required considerable human and financial resources. In due course, Ethiopia would consider which instruments to ratify based on its means. Similarly, Ethiopia had never adopted any policy against special procedures, but instead of extending a standing invitation to the special procedures mandate holders, it preferred to decide the terms of its cooperation on a case-by-case basis. Several Special Rapporteurs had already been invited to visit Ethiopia, and consultations were under way for the others.

31. Regarding the need to ensure that customary or religious law was coherent with constitutional law, the former applied only to specific matters, mainly related to family law, whereas the Constitution defined the general framework. For instance, it stipulated that

traditional or religious practices must neither be harmful nor violate provisions of the Family Code.

32. Human rights education was provided by Government bodies and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, which ran a major programme in that domain. The Commission complied with the Paris Principles, in that it was independent, undertook national consultations and drew on international experience, and therefore deserved A status.

33. No civil society organization was banned in Ethiopia. The Charities and Societies Proclamation provided a framework conducive to the exercise of freedom of association in the country and provided a predictable and transparent system founded on accountability in accreditation and operation. Prohibition of more than 10 per cent funding from foreign donors for human rights organizations, so as not to be classified as foreign, was hardly restrictive, given the organizations' strong local roots and the opportunities for national funding. The funding freeze issue had been taken to the courts, which had ruled that the frozen funds could be used at a later date, subject to existing regulations. Two organizations that had received funds following the entry into force of the Proclamation, had appealed the decision to freeze their funds, demonstrating that remedies were available. Irrespective of the domain, 70 per cent of funds raised nationally or internationally had to be used to finance the projects for which the funds had been earmarked, the remaining 30 per cent being allocated to overheads.

34. Food security was a Government priority, the prime objective being to improve the productivity of small agricultural holdings, thanks in part to high-yield seeds and better practices. The Government planned to promote the exploitation of unused arable land in the west of the country which could accommodate large-scale agricultural activities. It had set up water management schemes as well as drought prevention and early warning programmes, so that Ethiopia had not experienced famine in 20 years, even in periods of drought. Food distribution was carried out preventively and without any form of discrimination, particularly in eastern parts of the country prone to *La Niña*, thereby avoiding displacements of population.

35. Ethiopia did not carry out arbitrary or forced displacements. It did not need to resort to them since it had approximately 84 million hectares of unused and uninhabited arable land. Resettlement programmes were voluntary and aimed to give people access to basic services, including health care. Displacement resulting from certain public works projects, such as the building of dams, required the inhabitants' consent and carried compensation.

36. **Mr. Yimer** (Ethiopia) stressed that there was absolutely no forced resettlement in Ethiopia nor did Government antiterrorism action result in any such operations. The judiciary was completely independent and all international instruments, including the Covenant, were part of domestic law and could be invoked by the courts. Foreign nationals definitely enjoyed economic and social rights in Ethiopia, but certain rights could only be exercised by Ethiopian citizens.

37. The main objective of the Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan was poverty reduction, with a view to reaching middle-income status by 2025. It was reasonable to be optimistic about this objective, given that Ethiopia's economy was growing and ranked among the top 10 fastest growing economies in the world. For various social and cultural reasons, there were currently no plans to decriminalize homosexuality. Ethiopia would include more statistical data in its next report to the Committee.

38. **Mr. Getahun** (Ethiopia) said that most of the available arable land was intended for commercial agricultural investment. The fight against a terrorist group in the Somali National Regional State did not constitute armed conflict; it was merely a response by police and armed forces to acts of terrorism. Ethiopia abided by the Geneva Conventions of

1949 and the additional protocols thereto, and the State party undertook to continue working with all duly mandated international organizations and granting them access to all regions.

39. **Mr. Abraha** (Ethiopia) recalled that Ethiopia had recorded an average growth rate of 11 per cent over the previous eight years, thanks to the Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (2004–2010) and the Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan, which focused mainly on agricultural modernization. Ethiopia's growth rate was forecast to remain at 11 per cent for the next five years.

40. **Mr. Hidug** (Ethiopia) said that "villagization" programmes were under way in some parts of the country. That federal Government programme aimed to improve livelihoods through the Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan, the targets of which were efficient economic and social services, including drinking water, optimum health care, education, improved market access and agronomy practice and expanded road, power and telecommunication infrastructure.

41. The country already had more roads, and two irrigation canals had been built along the length of the Omo River. All these achievements had improved access to health care and reduced maternal mortality in particular, and irrigated farming benefited the local population as a whole. Resettlement and development schemes were implemented in accordance with the Constitution and the democratic principles enshrined therein. The process was voluntary and was subject to consultation. Resettlement occurred only once the Government had ascertained that the environmental conditions at the prospective location were favourable. Owners who chose to be resettled received arable land and benefits. The armed forces had never obstructed individuals from returning to their village of origin.

42. **Mr. Getahun** (Ethiopia) said that no law differentiated between men and women in legal proceedings, and several instruments were in place to ensure gender equality in access to justice. All public policymaking took the Covenant into consideration. All the recommendations issued by treaty bodies, the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights were being integrated into the national action plan for human rights currently being finalized by an intergovernmental body. Although some recommendations were based on allegations, the Government had nonetheless followed up on most of them. It was the federal Government's responsibility to ensure that the international obligations Ethiopia had entered into were fulfilled in all the regions. Human rights education fell under civic instruction.

43. **Mr. Abebe** (Ethiopia) said that the federal and state Governments worked closely together. The constitution of each state drew largely on the federal Constitution, which had primacy in the legal order, was rights-based and in line with the international instruments to which Ethiopia was a party. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversaw a mechanism coordinating foreign policy between federal and state Governments. He assured the Committee of the State party's commitment to empowering its citizens and that human rights education was provided at all levels. Women and girls had greatly benefited from Government growth policies. For example, the number of girls enrolled in school had increased from 469 in 1995 to 171,548 in 2010, while that of girls at university had risen from 871 to 123,706.

45. **Mr. Sadi** asked for a concrete example of a case where the Covenant had been invoked before the courts, whether there was a specific law against discrimination and how the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission had assessed how far domestic laws complied with the Covenant. He wondered about the effectiveness of efforts to counteract harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation, given that perpetrators of such acts incurred very light penalties.

46. **Ms. Shin** asked what financing options were available to NGOs, since the new Charities and Societies Proclamation limited Government contribution to 10 per cent and obliged organizations to raise the remaining 90 per cent from Ethiopian sources. She wondered how receiving foreign funds was a problem. Referring specifically to the date on which the authorities had gone to the Gambella region, and the number of people interviewed there, she wished to know the basis for the delegation's categorical denial of forced resettlement. Moreover, she considered it unreasonable to assert that treaty body recommendations were based on allegations. Lastly, on the issue of the gap between the law and practice, information in her possession demonstrated that the legal process often led to the acquittal of perpetrators, particularly in rape cases.

47. **Mr. Texier** expressed deep concern over the delegation's statements: Human Rights Watch, which he considered reliable, had published a report entitled *Waiting Here for Death: Displacement and "Villagization" in Ethiopia's Gambella Region*, reporting over 70,000 victims of forced displacement, as well as violence against individuals opposing it.

48. **Mr. Getahun** (Ethiopia) reiterated that forced displacements did not occur in the Gambella region, one of most extensive in the country, was sparsely inhabited and had sufficient arable land. It was not the first time that Human Rights Watch had published inaccurate or baseless information on the situation in Ethiopia, a fact that the Government had publicly averred. He did not wish to enter into conflict with the Committee, which could judge for itself the accuracy of its information and was perfectly entitled to its opinion.

49. Regarding the question on NGO funding, Ethiopia had sufficient national resources to provide the funds needed for the awareness-raising efforts of civil society organizations and that to systematically rely on international aid was not necessarily beneficial. With regard to awareness-raising, human resources — in other words people who devoted all their time and energy to defending a cause — were more precious than financial resources, and the management system of local organizations was by far more transparent than that of foreign organizations that showcased the misery of Ethiopian children as a fundraising technique. The Government was not opposed to awareness-raising; however, it preferred it to be carried out by local civil society organizations rather than foreign NGOs that flocked to the country and whose activities might overlap with domestic action.

50. Lastly, the Ethiopian Government did not want to be reliant on ODA, which would not help it lift itself out of poverty and could also dry up because of the global crisis. In fact, Ethiopia was currently receiving merely one quarter of the funds it usually received from regular donors, which were allocated to caring for the country's orphans. It was of course grateful to the donor community, including the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development, for financing food security programmes and the prevention and early warning mechanism, and knew that it could be counted on in emergency situations.

Articles 6 to 9

51. **Mr. Texier**, noting the State party's ethnic diversity, asked whether it had a particular reason for not ratifying International Labour Organization (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and whether it intended to do so.

52. Observing that in 2005 unemployment had been markedly higher among women than men in all regions of the country, more recent statistics would be useful. What specific measures had been undertaken to counter unemployment among women, and what was the extent of informal work in the State party?

53. He wished to know whether the State party had set a minimum wage at the national and even regional level and, if so, whether the amount had been negotiated with the social partners. If not, did the State party intend to set one?

54. Noting that the Ethiopian Teachers' Association had still not been accredited — despite many recommendations by the ILO group of independent experts to do so — he expressed concern about the Government's broad discretionary powers in terms of registration, management and disbanding of associations and other trade unions. In that connection, he recalled that ILO had considered that law as violating the ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the ILO Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

55. **Mr. Martynov** requested quantifiable data on the range of programmes put in place by the State party to counter unemployment, including the Small and Micro Enterprises Development Programme, the series of measures taken as part of the Urban Youth Development Package and the measures to promote women in the labour market. He wished to know how many people were benefiting from the National Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy and what effective tools the State party had put in place to help the unemployed reintegrate into the labour market.

56. He welcomed the State party's ratification in 2010 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and asked how many persons with disabilities lived in Ethiopia, what their employment rate was, what initiatives had been launched to promote their employment and whether there were incentives for Government and private organizations to recruit workers with disabilities and adapt their work stations.

57. He enquired whether the State party had instituted a labour inspection system and, if so, whether sufficient resources were allocated to it to guarantee compliance with international workplace health and safety standards, at least in businesses in the formal sector. He would also like to know the percentage of public-sector workers entitled to free medical coverage, and the situation of private-sector workers in that regard. What measures was the Government intending to take to ensure that workers in the informal economy — more than half the country's labour force in 2005 — were also entitled to social security?

58. Welcoming the increase in retirement pensions in January 2011, after many years of stagnation, he asked whether the State party planned to index them to inflation.

59. **Mr. Kedzia** asked whether the women's employment situation had improved since 2005, when 74 per cent of women had been unemployed. He wished to know what percentage of women worked in the informal sector and whether they had access to social protection. He enquired about the State party's implementation of the principle of equal pay for equal work for men and women, the wage gap, and any measures taken to remedy the situation. He was interested in knowing whether the goal of the Five-Year Growth and Transformation Plan — namely that 30 per cent of women would rise to decision-making positions and 50 per cent to middle management positions, thanks to enhanced access to information — was likely to be met, and how the State party was setting about it.

60. He wished to know what measures were being taken in the private sector and the informal economy to guarantee a healthy and safe work environment. Regarding the trade union accreditation procedure, he wished to know whether, in the event accreditation was denied, interested parties had any legal recourse and, if so, whether it was through a court, an independent body or a Government body. Lastly, did the Government guarantee the right to organize in the private sector? And did workers in the informal economy enjoy the same right?

61. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** asked whether the State party had taken advantage of its excellent growth rate to improve the employment situation nationally and whether aid given to small and microenterprises had in fact led to the creation of some 300,000 jobs.

62. **Mr. Ribeiro Leão**, noting that food security was at the heart of the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program, asked how much of the Government budget was allocated to agricultural development and what was the nature of the programmes — in which irrigation was naturally a key component — set up by Government in that area. He wished to know whether the mitigation measures undertaken at all levels of water management to address the challenges mentioned in paragraph 247 of the report under consideration had produced results.

63. **Mr. Riedel** asked what measures the State party planned for rapid improvement of access to drinking water and sanitation in rural areas. He wished to know how the State party intended to achieve the ambitious goal it had set itself of providing access to drinking water to 34 million additional people, including 31 million in rural areas, by 2015.

64. He requested additional information on care for persons with mental disabilities, including their treatment in detention facilities and, since the State party, as a rule, gave preference to hospitalization over outpatient care, who had the authority to order committal to an institution, whether it was possible to appeal such decisions and, if so, before which body.

65. **Mr. Atangana** asked why female victims of rape were reluctant to file complaints when, according to the delegation, the judicial system was completely independent.

66. **Ms. Barahona Riera** requested a copy of criminal provisions on domestic violence in order to give the Committee an exact idea of which acts committed within the family setting were considered offences. She also requested additional information on the effects of plans and programmes to combat sexual violence against women and children, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, the budget allocated to them, and the organization tasked with their implementation. Given the coexistence of two legal systems — sharia law, on the one hand, and the Family Code and the Criminal Code on the other — she wished to know whether cases involving acts of violence against women or children, including rape, had been brought before the courts and whether the complaints had led to any convictions.

67. She enquired about any existing sexual and reproductive health services and education programmes. Noting that the State party did not intend to decriminalize homosexuality, she wished to know whether information on the modes of HIV-transmission was provided to homosexuals and, more generally, what the State party's policy was for combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.