



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Summary record of the 2154th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 19 June 2025, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Haidar

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Eighth periodic report of Thailand ([CEDAW/C/THA/8](#); [CEDAW/C/THA/QPR/8](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Thailand joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Thailand**, introducing her country's eighth periodic report ([CEDAW/C/THA/8](#)), said that slightly more than half of the population were women, almost 70 per cent of whom were aged between 15 and 59. Women were key to fostering socioeconomic development and were a meaningful driving force for the country's sustainable growth.
3. The Civil and Commercial Code Amendment Act (No. 24) – also known as the marriage equality law – had come into force on 23 January 2025. It constituted a paradigm shift in national family law. It increased the minimum age for marriage from 17 to 18, introduced gender-neutral marriage terminology and allowed same-sex couples to adopt children and inherit property. To implement the Act, amendments to relevant legislation, such as the Child Adoption Act, had been drafted.
4. In addition, the Gender Equality Act was being reviewed to ensure further alignment with international standards and the obligations assumed by Thailand. First, the term “unfair gender discrimination” in section 3 of the Act was under review to ensure that the interpretation of discrimination was consistent throughout the Act. Second, exceptions to the non-discrimination provisions in section 17 would no longer include reasons of national security or religious principles. Third, the complaints mechanism provisions in section 18 would allow the use of a fund established to promote gender equality to assist claimants during the complaints process. The anti-discrimination bill currently before the Cabinet would strengthen the legal basis for eliminating discrimination on all grounds, including sex, gender, social status, disability, race, religion and ethnicity.
5. The National Women's Development Strategy for the period 2023–2027 had been developed to provide opportunities for all women, ensure their participation in socioeconomic development and promote their leadership. The National Committee on the Policy and Strategy for the Advancement of Women and the Committee for the Promotion of Gender Equality were responsible for establishing and implementing gender equality policies. A substantial budget had been allocated to the Department of Women's Affairs and Family Development to ensure that policies were implemented at the national and local levels.
6. The Government had introduced a strategy to teach children and young people the skills needed to manage risks when using digital technology and online media. It had also strengthened its cooperation with partners, including the private sector, civil society, international organizations and youth representatives, by establishing the Thailand Safe Internet Coalition to address online threats affecting children, young people and Thai society in general.
7. Thailand had continued its policy of inclusive education and provided 15 years of free schooling for all children, regardless of background. The country had also expanded access to non-formal and lifelong education for those who had missed out on formal education. Schools had been established in border or underserved areas under royal initiatives. Thailand had encouraged comprehensive sexuality education in basic education through an online teacher training programme.
8. The Women's Role Development Fund had been established to enable women to pursue careers and income opportunities. The Fund also improved women's access to financial resources and expanded childcare services for children under 3 in order to promote equality in terms of family responsibilities. The Child Support Grant and the State Welfare Card schemes provided monthly financial assistance to support low-income households.
9. The 2023 general election results had reflected a growing awareness of the need for equal gender representation, with a significant rise in the number of women and LGBTQ+

individuals elected to leadership roles. The current Cabinet included eight female ministers, the highest number in the country's political history. There were currently 15 female provincial governors, including the country's first female Muslim governor, appointed in Pattani Province in 2022.

10. The Government promoted universal access to public health services, taking measures to ensure that vulnerable women, including informal female workers and registered migrant women, had access to healthcare. It also worked to provide comprehensive healthcare to people living in mountainous regions. All women and girls were guaranteed equal access to health services under the universal coverage health scheme. The Government was seeking to improve data integration across agencies to facilitate more accurate assessment of situations relating to intersectionality and the needs of specific groups, including women in rural areas, ethnic minority groups, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ persons and migrant workers.

11. In 2024, the Cabinet had approved guidelines to address nationality and legal status issues for long-term migrants and their children born in Thailand and to integrate stateless persons who had lived in the country for a long time and their children born in Thailand.

12. Women played a key role in overcoming the structural demographic challenges facing Thailand. The Government had adopted a policy, entitled "5x5: Let's Turn the Tide" to address those challenges. The policy created opportunities for women by promoting vocational skills development and strengthening family support. In addition, various programmes had been introduced to promote and protect the rights of older persons, encourage their participation in community life and assist those experiencing violence and discrimination.

13. Persons with disabilities had access to free special basic education from birth, or from the time that a disability was identified, and to assistive devices and other educational support throughout their studies, up to the tertiary level. Educational settings included specialized schools for students with specific disabilities and mainstream schools offering both special and inclusive education.

14. The Government had taken significant steps to advance the women and peace and security agenda. Policies and plans on national security for the period 2023–2027 emphasized peaceful coexistence, respect for diversity and the protection of all individuals, including women, in accordance with human rights principles. Furthermore, the draft policy on administration and development in the southern border provinces for the period 2025–2027 had been developed to support vulnerable groups and develop networks of women and young people to promote peace within communities.

15. The Advisory Council on Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development included nine female representatives. The Coordination Centre for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces had been established as a joint mechanism between the Government and civil society. It served as a platform to mobilize resources, receive complaints and resolve issues involving women and children that could lead to conflict and human rights violations. Regular meetings and training sessions had been organized for religious leaders in the region to raise awareness of women's rights.

16. Thailand was committed to reducing the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change. The country had developed a National Adaptation Plan that placed strong emphasis on the gender dimension at every stage, from planning and decision-making to community participation. In addition, several laws had been enacted with the shared objective of encouraging people to work with the Government in conserving, restoring and managing natural resources sustainably, protecting the environment and promoting biodiversity, with women playing a central role in those efforts.

17. Thailand remained steadfast in its mission to promote gender equality and to uphold and protect the human rights of women, girls, LGBTQI+ persons and others facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Empowering women was central to the Government's commitment to ensuring that women's rights were human rights, and human rights were women's rights.

18. **A representative of the National Human Rights Commission, Thailand**, said that, although the Government of Thailand had made efforts to promote gender equality, many

women, particularly those from vulnerable groups, continued to face significant obstacles in exercising their fundamental rights, including women with disabilities, migrant workers, LGBTQ+ persons, women in detention, stateless persons, women from ethnic minority communities, refugees, sex workers, human rights defenders and women in southern border provinces.

19. Women with disabilities encountered violence and barriers to access to the justice system. They were also subjected to forced sterilization and abortion and were excluded from decision-making processes. Women belonging to ethnic minorities remained without legal status and were not protected under the law. Climate change also threatened their livelihoods, as they relied heavily on agriculture. Women in detention experienced overcrowding; 46 per cent of women's detention facilities in Thailand exceeded their capacity, resulting in poor hygiene, limited space and mental health issues. Migrant workers were excluded from labour protection laws and unable to report abuse for fear of deportation. Victims of domestic violence were poorly protected and were often pressured into settling cases with their abusers. Despite legal reforms aimed at revoking criminal penalties, sex workers faced arrest, public shaming and even violence. Women human rights defenders often had to contend with threats or harassment, simply for standing up for their communities. Transgender and other gender-diverse persons could be denied healthcare or justice because their gender identity was not legally recognized. Those cases demonstrated that deep-rooted discrimination still prevented many women from obtaining an education, healthcare and justice and finding safety and support.

20. The National Human Rights Commission believed that structural reform was needed in three key areas. First, women must be represented in national decision-making bodies and involved in the development of laws and policies. Second, discriminatory laws against women needed to be eliminated and new laws introduced to protect their rights. Third, women in marginalized communities must be given greater access to education and job opportunities, since, without economic empowerment, they would continue to be trapped in cycles of poverty and abuse. Every effort must be made to ensure that all women, regardless of background, could fully and equally enjoy their rights. That required listening to their voices, amending unjust laws and providing the necessary tools and support to enable them to build better lives.

Articles 1–6

21. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis** said that two significant legal reforms were particularly noteworthy. The first was the marriage equality law, which made Thailand the first country in South-East Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. The second was the recently adopted amendments to the Organic Act on Anti-Corruption (No. 2), which included provisions to protect those who reported corruption from strategic lawsuits against public participation.

22. She wished to urge the Government to expedite two other laws currently in the pipeline: the revised law on domestic violence and the new law on the protection of sex workers. The latter law must be drafted with the active participation of sex workers themselves.

23. Section 27 of the Constitution prohibited discrimination based on gender and other intersectional grounds. However, she would like to know whether the delegation considered the section's provisions on direct and indirect discrimination, *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination and formal and substantive equality to be compliant with the Convention.

24. Constitutional protections must cover not only overt forms of discrimination but also the subtle biases woven deep into the institutional fabric of public and private organizations. Such structural forms of discrimination called for systemic changes in public life and in economic life. There was also a need to address the new biases and stereotypes that became embedded in computer code – such as algorithmic biases – when large language models were trained on historically biased data. In that connection, she would urge the Government to remain vigilant as it pursued its national artificial intelligence strategy, since that was an important new frontier for gender justice and women's leadership.

25. She wished to know what measures were being taken to broaden the civic space for human rights defenders and women journalists and to strengthen the right to freedom of

expression, assembly and association both online and offline. She wondered what safeguards the State Party provided against arbitrary arrest, detention and prosecution of human rights defenders and what guarantees were in place to ensure access to justice and due process. She would appreciate information on the protections in place against cyberbullying and cyberharassment. She wondered how the Computer Crime Act balanced national security interests with the right to freedom of association of human rights defenders; how the Safe Internet Coalition addressed hate speech, misinformation, technological surveillance and technology-facilitated gender-based violence, which could have a chilling effect on women human rights defenders and women in politics; how free speech was guaranteed for women in the opposition; and how access to justice and legal aid was ensured for migrant workers, Muslim women and Indigenous women.

26. She would appreciate an explanation as to why section 6 of the Gender Equality Act of 2015 disqualified persons with disabilities from the position of expert member of the Committee for the Promotion of Gender Equality, especially in the light of the strong protections against intersectional discrimination under the Constitution.

27. Given that, in recent years, the number of women on death row had fallen as a result of commutations of sentence, she wished to know whether the Government intended to review mandatory sentencing guidelines so that the courts could consider exculpatory or mitigatory factors, such as homelessness and mental health issues, in cases involving offences for which the death penalty could be imposed, especially drug-related offences.

28. As Thailand had played a key role in the development and adoption of the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), she would be interested to know why the State Party's prisons and immigration detention centres continued to experience record levels of overcrowding. She wondered how many women sat on the committee established pursuant to the Act on the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance of 2022 and to what extent women were involved in the investigation and prosecution of such offences.

29. The State Party was to be commended on the inclusion of non-traditional security challenges, such as climate change, in its national action plan on women and peace and security. She would encourage it to refer, in national, regional and international climate litigation, to the Convention and to the Committee's general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change.

30. Regarding traditional security challenges, she would be grateful for information on how the authorities engaged with Muslim, Indigenous, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and women with disabilities as peacemakers, including in the context of the 2020 project of the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre. She would appreciate details of measures to protect the rights of women in indefinite detention in immigration detention centres. Lastly, she would be interested to know whether the State Party's next national action plan on women and peace and security would take account of threats to women's cybersecurity, such as deepfakes and other artificial intelligence-driven technologies.

31. **A representative of Thailand** said that the concept of "unjust discrimination" as described in section 27 of the Constitution allowed for exceptions to the prohibition on discrimination in cases where differential treatment was objectively justified. Such treatment included the granting of maternity leave for pregnant women and the allocation of separate prisons cells for male, female and LGBTQ inmates. Those measures were not unconstitutional as they were based on reasonable grounds and intended to achieve fair and appropriate outcomes in specific contexts. By contrast, examples of unjust discrimination included gender-based dress code restrictions and the refusal to hire or dismissal of an employee based on sex or gender identity.

32. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Government recognized the important role played by human rights defenders, who had been identified as a key target group of the fifth National Human Rights Plan and the second National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. It had made efforts to strengthen the legislative framework to create a safe and enabling environment for human rights defenders, including by broadening the definition

of a witness in order to extend protection for whistleblowers and persons reporting criminal offences under the Witness Protection Act. Furthermore, a bill currently in progress would safeguard human rights defenders and the general public from reprisals in the form of strategic lawsuits against public participation when they exercised their rights in the public interest; such protection was already in place for those who reported corruption or misconduct in public office.

33. The Rights and Liberties Protection Department of the Ministry of Justice provided legal assistance in various forms to ensure fair, efficient and inclusive access to justice and organized continuous outreach to raise awareness of human rights, legal support mechanisms and services and the role of human rights defenders. The Department also monitored cases related to human rights defenders in the criminal courts.

34. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Computer Crime Act of 2007 addressed the problem of online sexual exploitation and abuse; section 14 (4) of the Act established the offence of inputting obscene data into a computer system. The Electronic Transactions Development Agency had developed the “ETDA Digital Citizen” course to promote Internet awareness among children, youth and older persons. The course, which imparted essential knowledge on digital identity, security, communication and literacy, had been delivered in cooperation with public and private companies, academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Agency also provided training programmes to build the capacity of children and young people to deal with risks arising from online media use. The Government had implemented a strategic plan for the promotion and protection of children and youth in the use of online media for the period 2017–2021.

35. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Department of Corrections was committed to promoting the equal access of all women in detention to rights, protection and security, in accordance with the Bangkok Rules. Specific rules and practices ensured the dignified treatment and addressed the specific needs of women prisoners, with special consideration given to their mental and emotional well-being. New inmates were informed about prison regulations, legal rights, communication with family and, where appropriate, language and consular assistance. Female prisoners underwent a health screening upon admission, and pregnant or ill inmates received medical care tailored to their specific needs.

36. The Department of Corrections had issued regulations on body searches for new inmates and persons entering or leaving prisons. Body searches of female inmates, including transgender women, were conducted in designated areas by female officers using non-invasive methods. Invasive searches were strictly prohibited. Since 2013, body scanners had been installed in 25 facilities that housed female inmates, and the Department aimed to install such equipment in all prisons.

37. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Ministry of Public Health and the Department of Corrections worked together to uphold the human rights of female death row inmates, focusing on their physical and mental health and security. They enjoyed the same right to healthcare as other inmates, including regular medical check-ups, sexual and reproductive health services and, where necessary, specialized care from visiting professionals. Mental health services included counselling and therapeutic intervention, particularly for prisoners with a history of abuse, while those with severe psychiatric conditions could receive specialist treatment at external medical facilities.

38. In 2015, a pilot project had been launched in which psychological rehabilitation centres for female inmates, known as “Happy Centres”, had been established in selected prisons. The centres offered counselling and group activity in a safe and supportive environment. The rehabilitation programme combined vocational training, education initiatives and life skills development to foster psychological well-being and facilitate social integration.

39. Female death row inmates retained other fundamental rights, including the right to receive equitable treatment, in accordance with the Bangkok Rules and other international human rights standards. Special provisions for pregnant inmates facing the death penalty included the suspension of the enforcement of the penalty for three years following childbirth. Such women received adequate antenatal care, were permitted to give birth outside the correctional facility and underwent postnatal recovery under medical supervision. Mothers

incarcerated with their children received appropriate childcare support. The courts could take account of mitigating factors such as the absence of a prior criminal record and caregiving responsibilities.

40. **A representative of Thailand** said that Thailand placed the women and peace and security agenda at the forefront of its multilateral diplomacy. The country had participated in many United Nations peacekeeping operations over the years. The Government was committed to contributing more female peacekeepers and gender experts to United Nations missions. Twenty-eight women were currently serving in the 273-strong Thai military and police contingent that had been deployed under the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan.

41. The new national action plan on women and peace and security would be guided by three core principles – gender equality, a human rights-based approach and the response to the diverse needs of women – and would focus on women affected by conflict situations, women community and religious leaders, women human rights defenders and women working in conflict areas, among others. The plan was being finalized and would be launched by the end of the year.

42. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Coordination Centre for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces promoted the role of women and girls in peacebuilding. Women accounted for 9 out of 49 members of the Strategic Committee for the Development of the Southern Border Provinces and thus participated in the approval, monitoring and evaluation of administrative policies for those provinces. The Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre had established peace councils in 317 subdistricts and had engaged with civil society, youth and women.

43. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Government provided opportunities for women to participate in the formulation and implementation of climate policies and encouraged their involvement in related decision-making processes and activities, such as activities to build the resilience and enhance the skills of women working in low-income sectors or the informal economy. Funding was allocated to support women's engagement in climate change initiatives, and efforts were being made to revise laws and regulations that created barriers to women's participation.

44. **A representative of Thailand** said that the committee established pursuant to the Act on the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance was composed of 11 representatives of government bodies and 6 representatives of independent organizations. Representatives were appointed on the basis of their position, meaning that it was not possible to establish gender requirements for the membership. The committee currently had three female members.

45. **Ms. González Ferrer** said that, while the Committee welcomed legislative progress such as the adoption of the Gender Equality Act and the marriage equality law, it was concerned to note persistent gaps in the implementation of the State Party's legal framework. Moreover, institutional barriers and cultural stigma continued to prevent genuine progress towards substantive equality, especially in the conflict-affected southern border provinces of Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani, where Muslim women, Indigenous women and women with disabilities faced multiple forms of discrimination. She therefore wished to know what had been done to ensure the effective implementation of gender equality policies in those provinces and to harmonize religious and customary law with national laws and the country's international commitments on gender equality.

46. She wondered what steps had been taken to strengthen the technical capacity and autonomy of the National Committee on the Policy and Strategy for the Advancement of Women; to secure the participation of women with disabilities, migrant, Indigenous and rural women and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of its policies; and to ensure the effective coordination of its activities with those of the Committee for the Promotion of Gender Equality. Lastly, in the light of section 71 of the Constitution, the delegation might explain what mechanisms were in place to ensure that all ministries and government institutions applied gender-responsive budgeting.

47. **Ms. Mu**, expressing concern that the State Party had not adopted any temporary special measures to achieve substantive equality in areas where women were disadvantaged, said that she wished to know whether the Government intended to adopt any such measures to address the underrepresentation of women in all three branches of government – for example, they accounted for only 16 per cent of parliamentarians – and to increase their representation on boards of directors. She was also keen to know whether temporary special measures, such as quotas, might be adopted so that women from religious and ethnic minorities and other marginalized and vulnerable women could enjoy equal economic and social rights, including the right to social security. She would be interested to hear about measures to reduce poverty and tackle violence against women in the southern border provinces, including harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, and about any accompanying initiatives in areas such as capacity-building, leadership training and citizen education.

48. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Constitution contained a commitment to the use of gender-responsive budgeting. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security played a key role in efforts to enhance the understanding and use of gender-responsive budgeting by government officials, local administrations and the private sector and, to that end, had signed memorandums of understanding with other government agencies, academic institutions and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and had organized seminars on the topic, in cooperation with UN-Women. The Ministry also encouraged the use of a manual and checklist to guide the preparation of gender-responsive budgets; the manual had been revised to enhance the macro-level implementation of such budgets. The business sector worked with the Securities and Exchange Commission and UN-Women to integrate gender-responsive budgeting principles into business operations.

49. In a subdistrict of Chiang Mai Province, following an assessment of inequality in the community and identification of issues of concern, including unequal pay, gender stereotypes and domestic violence, the Ministry had provided assistance for the drafting of budget proposals that allocated funds to address specific needs, which had enabled the local administration to increase school students' awareness of gender equality.

50. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, in conjunction with academia, had conducted comparative research on quotas for political participation. The results had demonstrated that, at the national level, candidate quotas used by political parties on a voluntary basis had a positive impact on democratic governance, while at the local level, a quota system based on reserved seats was more effective in increasing the proportion of women elected to political positions.

51. In 2023, 19.88 per cent of parliamentarians had been women, representing a significant increase compared to 2019. Currently, 23 per cent of senators were women, as were 8 of the 36 cabinet ministers. In the private sector, women made up 19 per cent of board members, which was above the average for the Asia-Pacific region, but just 7.2 per cent of chairs of boards of directors, which was below the regional average.

52. **A representative of Thailand** said that, in the southern border provinces, Islamic family law applied to Muslim citizens, including in respect of marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance rights. In addition, a hybrid court system was in place to handle disputes between Muslims. Situations for which Islamic law did not contain specific provisions were handled by the Thai civil and commercial courts. Muslim women who were victims of domestic violence or sexual violence could seek assistance through alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and government support services.

53. **A representative of Thailand** said that, in the southern border provinces, the regulations established by the Central Islamic Council in 2018 prohibited marriage for anyone under the age of 17 years. All marriages were subject to the approval of the Council following interviews with the prospective spouses conducted by three people, one of whom must be a woman.

54. Persons who were dissatisfied with rulings handed down under Islamic law could file grievances with the Female Empowerment Centre, which also provided training and referrals.

Between 2019 and 2024, the Centre had provided services to 3,855 users, 3,000 of whom were male.

55. Legal provisions were in place to provide rehabilitation and remedies for victims of improper conduct by officials. Assistance totalling over 20 million baht (B) had been provided to more than 3,500 victims. Remedies had also been provided to 13,000 victims of conflict in the southern border provinces, including 3,000 women. Approximately 500 children affected by the conflict had received scholarships and educational support.

56. A centre had been set up to develop and support productive activities for Muslim women. Around 5,000 families living in poverty in 316 subdistricts received occupational support totalling B 1 million. Support had also been made available to 50 small- and medium-sized enterprises producing food and textiles to help them gain access to markets and e-commerce options.

57. **Ms. Rana** said that she would like to know what steps the Government planned to take to expedite the enactment of the amendments to the Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act of 2007, approved in March 2025, which focused on victim-centred principles, accountability for perpetrators and measures to address harmful mediation and reconciliation practices. She wondered how the authorities ensured that survivor-centred protection, psychosocial support and legal remedies were available to all victims, including women in rural, conflict-affected and marginalized communities. It would be helpful to hear about any plans to enact comprehensive legislation specifically criminalizing online gender-based violence, as well as about any measures in place to ensure that women who experienced such violence were able to report incidents safely and obtain access to justice without being exposed to victim-blaming, retraumatization or inaction by the authorities.

58. In the light of the outdated and fragmented nature of the available data on violence against women and the lack of reporting of cases, the delegation might provide details of how policies designed to prevent gender-based violence were monitored and evaluated and of any efforts to collect and publish disaggregated data on cases.

59. She would welcome a description of any programmes in place to dismantle harmful stereotypes, in particular those that portrayed women as subordinate and confined them to domestic roles, and stigmatization, especially of Indigenous, Muslim and transgender women, and to ensure that women belonging to those groups were able to obtain access to justice and public services without discrimination. She would also like to know about any programmes designed to engage men and boys in efforts to counteract discriminatory social norms.

60. Lastly, the delegation might comment on any steps being taken to explicitly criminalize and eliminate harmful practices such as bride abduction and female genital mutilation and to conduct campaigns to raise awareness of the impact on women of those practices.

61. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen** said that she wished to know how the Government would ensure that efforts to combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of forced labour were effective, including with regard to the identification of victims, the provision of adequate training to officials and the prosecution and punishment of perpetrators, including the imposition of penalties commensurate with the gravity of the crime. The delegation might explain how the authorities planned to protect girls from being trafficked by their parents, both online and offline, given the leniency of the relevant provisions of the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act.

62. It would be helpful to know what steps the Government was taking to ensure that the national referral mechanism for trafficking victims was applied in an effective and non-discriminatory manner throughout the State Party and that all relevant stakeholders involved in trafficking investigations and prosecutions received proper training, including in the provision of trauma-informed care to victims.

63. Following the abrupt cessation of the work of the committee that had been formed to draft a law on the protection of sex workers, it would be interesting to know how the Government intended to regulate prostitution and ensure that due attention was given to the rights of women selling sexual services and the risks of trafficking in persons.

64. **A representative of Thailand** said that the 2025 amendments to the Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act had been designed primarily to improve processes and protective measures for victims. There was no forced reconciliation, and victims' needs and decisions were respected. Pursuant to the Act, if a marriage was no longer viable, the persons concerned should live separately, without interfering with the lives of their former spouses. Any agreements or settlements related to domestic violence cases must take account of the victim's mindset and the power dynamics within the relationship.

65. **A representative of Thailand** said that Thailand was committed to eliminating all forms of female genital mutilation. In conjunction with community networks, religious leaders and local authorities, the Ministry of Public Health was making efforts to raise awareness of the practice among at-risk groups and provide education on possible consequences, including infections, reproductive health problems and long-term psychological effects. Traditional birth attendants were provided with training on topics including wound care and referral procedures, with the aim of reducing the number of women who acquired a disability or died as a result of the practice.

66. **A representative of Thailand** said that, between 2021 and 2023, no complaints of gender discrimination in employment had been received, nor had any gender discrimination-related violations been detected during labour inspections. The Ministry of Labour conducted regular monitoring of employment practices and took immediate action in response to any reports of discrimination. The Government was committed to strengthening the legal framework and enforcement mechanisms to prevent all forms of gender-based discrimination in the workplace. The relevant agencies continued to work hard to ensure comprehensive protection for all workers, irrespective of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

67. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Government was committed to addressing trafficking in persons, with a particular focus on women and girls in rural and marginalized communities, including through the national action plan that had been put in place to tackle trafficking in persons during the period 2023–2027. Its anti-trafficking strategy was rooted in prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership, using a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

68. Since 2018, several hundred anti-trafficking toolkits had been distributed to promote youth-focused education and training and raise awareness of trafficking. The toolkits had been updated in 2024 to address emerging forms of exploitation such as online sexual abuse, forced criminality, romance scams and cyberfraud.

69. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Government acknowledged that gender stereotypes were deeply engrained and that changing mindsets would take considerable efforts. Nevertheless, awareness-raising campaigns were under way. Moreover, a project had been carried out to identify sexist language and gender stereotypes in primary and secondary school textbooks, resulting in the preparation of a handbook, which had been distributed in schools and libraries, to help teachers combat gender stereotypes. The goal was to collaborate with the Ministry of Education on a policy banning sexist language and gender stereotypes in all textbooks. Although the focus was currently on gender stereotypes, Thailand pledged also to tackle other stereotypes.

70. **Ms. Rana** said that she wished to know what the timeline for the enactment of the March 2025 amendments to the Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act was and whether it could be prioritized. She also wished to know whether the State Party was envisaging the enactment of comprehensive legislation on technology-facilitated violence, which appeared to be a significant issue in Thailand. While she was pleased to note that the State Party was taking measures other than awareness-raising to address stereotypes, such as the development of the handbook just mentioned, it was still not clear to her whether those efforts involved men and boys.

71. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen**, pointing out that a country's laws on prostitution shaped how sex workers were perceived, said that she would like to know whether the State Party planned to decriminalize sex work.

72. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to know how the State Party was addressing cybertrafficking in the absence of adequate criminal provisions on the issue, as well as trafficking in children in the context of intercountry adoption.

73. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis**, noting the use of technology to target women in public and political life, including through online scams, asked whether the State Party took a gender-sensitive approach to tackling such practices.

74. **A representative of Thailand** said that, under the amendments currently being formulated, persons aged 20 and above who voluntarily engaged in sex work would not be criminally liable, the right to dignity and freedom over one's body would be protected for both sex workers and their clients and sex workers would have access to justice and social protection.

Articles 7–9

75. **Ms. Stott Despoja**, drawing the State Party's attention to the Committee's general comment No. 40 (2024) on equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, said that the Committee was concerned that, although women's role in politics and decision-making was enshrined in the Constitution, their representation in political institutions was low. In that connection, she wished to know what legislative measures were being taken to combat issues such as gendered hate speech and harmful stereotypes that deterred women from participating in political life and what plans there were to address bullying and disrespectful behaviour in the parliament.

76. While she welcomed the constitutional provisions requiring consultations to be conducted with minority groups regarding draft bills that were of concern to them, she wondered how the resulting recommendations were implemented.

77. She wished to hear about the steps being taken to rectify the apparent underrepresentation of women in the public service, the diplomatic corps and peace processes, with particular regard to the inclusion of minority groups, such as women from the south of the country, Pattani Malay women and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women. She wondered whether the State Party planned to increase the number of women in the military.

78. She would welcome sex-disaggregated data on representation in high-level decision-making positions in the private sector. She would also welcome an update on the status of the recommendations concerning human rights defenders in the fourth and fifth National Human Rights Plans, as well as information on steps taken to ensure that Thai human rights activists, including women and members of ethnic minorities, were able to participate in international human rights mechanisms.

79. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to know whether Thailand, which was host to more than half a million registered stateless persons, planned to amend the Nationality Act to grant equal access to citizenship to men and women, to accede to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, to adopt national legislation on refugees and asylum-seekers, to reduce statelessness among women and children and to introduce special measures to ensure that migrant women and children had access to education and healthcare.

80. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Royal Thai Police had opened a number of recruitment tracks to ensure that there were female officers in all areas of activity. For example, the Royal Police Cadet Academy admitted at least 100 women with a bachelor's degree per year on the basis of an examination, and 20 per cent of commissioned inquiry officer positions were reserved for women. Of the more than 211,500 police officers, some 20,500, or nearly 10 per cent, were women. While the highest ranks in the Royal Thai Police were held by men, female officers were advancing steadily to the junior and middle levels. For instance, almost 17 per cent of superintendents were women, compared to 13 per cent in 2021, and four women held the rank of deputy commissioner. The Royal Thai Police upheld the principles of non-discrimination and gender equality in its approach to human resource development and career advancement.

81. **A representative of Thailand** said that women generally performed better on the foreign service examination than men. Approximately two thirds of Thai diplomats – and more than 36 per cent of ambassadors – were women. A number of benefits were available to support women in the foreign service, including maternity and parental leave and the option to accompany a spouse on a posting abroad. The Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the highest-ranking official in the Ministry, as well as 5 of the 12 directors general, were women. Thailand had consistently contributed female officers to United Nations peacekeeping missions and elsewhere. Women were encouraged to participate in multilateral forums; in fact, Thai women were represented in the human rights treaty bodies and special procedures.

82. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Government had been gradually extending the protection of the basic rights of stateless persons, chiefly the rights to birth registration, healthcare and education. A Cabinet resolution had been adopted in October 2024 to expedite the process of nationality acquisition through a simplified application procedure, thus enabling stateless children to obtain Thai nationality and registered stateless adults to obtain permanent residency as a step towards naturalization. Implementation of the resolution was expected to begin in July 2025 and would be assessed after one year.

83. **A representative of Thailand** said that, while gender bias against women in politics persisted, especially at the local level, the number of women in local assemblies was rising. Her own academic work had shown that women candidates tended to win in districts where there were more than two candidates. Thus, it was important not only to help women candidates design their campaigns, but also to take strategic advantage of the system.

84. **Mr. Safarov**, noting that there appeared to be little appetite to discuss the problem of statelessness, said that he nonetheless wished to press the issue of how the State Party provided healthcare, education and other social services to the millions of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

85. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that she would welcome specific replies to her earlier questions on progress made in implementing the recommendations concerning human rights defenders, participation in multilateral mechanisms and peace processes and inclusion of minority groups in public and private sector decision-making, along with sex-disaggregated data where appropriate. It was still not clear whether the State Party would consider adopting a specific programme to stamp out disrespect and bullying in the parliament. Lastly, she wondered how it intended to translate the fact that women outperformed men in the entrance examination into greater representation in the foreign service.

86. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis** said that she wished to point out that temporary special measures could also be included in development policies, for instance, in the area of loans, as well as in action plans on artificial intelligence and climate change adaptation.

87. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Ministry of Public Health actively ensured that migrant women had access to health services, including reproductive health services, almost on a par with Thai nationals. Registered migrants employed in the formal sector were enrolled in an insurance scheme that offered a package of benefits very similar to those available under the universal coverage health scheme for Thai nationals, including social security benefits and comprehensive healthcare. The Ministry had rolled out a voluntary health insurance scheme for migrants, irrespective of their status, which included emergency and routine medical care, psychological support and sexual and reproductive health services. The Ministry continued to collaborate with partners to expand access to healthcare and reduce health inequalities.

88. **A representative of Thailand** said that, although Thailand was not a party to the 1951 Convention or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, the Government had nonetheless consistently provided humanitarian assistance to displaced persons. An effective national screening mechanism had been developed, and migrant children and their mothers were placed in child protection shelters rather than immigration detention centres.

89. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had prepared a policy framework on humanitarian assistance for all vulnerable populations along the border with Myanmar, focused on public health and education, which had recently been approved by the National Security Council.

Regarding education, the assistance provided would revolve around ensuring access to basic education in Thai public schools for children from Myanmar, improving access to vocational training and developing a pathway to regularization for those children. In terms of healthcare, the emphasis would be on training healthcare practitioners and providing medicine and medical supplies, including vaccines for childhood diseases. Furthermore, ways of allowing Myanmar healthcare professionals to provide treatment and rehabilitation to Myanmar nationals living along the border in Thailand were being explored.

90. **A representative of Thailand** said that a recent survey had shown that 80 per cent of Thai women hoped to start their own businesses, significantly above the global average of 51 per cent, and that 59 per cent were either employed or ran their own businesses for extra income. Research showed that Thai women were more technologically savvy than men. In February 2025, the Office of Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion had established a definition of “female entrepreneur of a small and medium enterprise” to serve as a guide for other government agencies in establishing support, benefits or temporary measures for women entrepreneurs and facilitate data collection to inform future work.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.