



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child Fifty-third session

### Summary record of the 1471st (Chamber A) meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 18 January 2010, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Lee

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.*

### **Consideration of reports of States parties**

*Second periodic report of Tajikistan (CRC/C/TJK/2; CRC/C/TJK/Q/2; CRC/C/TJK/Q/2/Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Tajikistan took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Ms. Kurbonova** (Tajikistan) said that, having achieved independence, Tajikistan had chosen to give priority to social protection and social development, which meant, above all, supporting the family and children. The Government had also increased its commitment to carrying out social reform in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals and the plan of action "A World Fit for Children". Considerable progress had been made in attaining the Goals in 2005 and a national development strategy had been drawn up. Although much remained to be done, 8 laws and 5 decrees had been adopted in the area of health care, 5 laws and 10 decrees in the area of education and 15 decrees in the area of social protection and rights. The legislation strengthened the guaranteed rights of all children, regardless of ethnicity, sex, race, language, religion, social background, level of wealth, place of residence or circumstances of birth.
3. Access to and participation in education was a key aspect of State policy, in accordance with article 41 of the Constitution. The country's education system was based on the principles of unity and on the close links between education and the national and cultural traditions of the Tajik people and other ethnic groups in Tajikistan. No restrictions were placed on educational opportunities for any people or ethnic group in Tajikistan. In the most remote regions schools had been built for even the smallest ethnic groups. Throughout the country, ethnic minorities had equal rights to education. There were 1,160 schools where children of other ethnic groups could be taught in their own languages.
4. The school attendance rate stood at 96 per cent, which itself was an improvement on the previous year. The vast majority of teachers, particularly in general educational institutions, were women. Education on rights was well catered for. Children started learning about rights in classes 5 or 6 through literature, history and general education lessons. In classes 8 and 9, children learned about the basics of government and law, while in classes 10 and 11 human rights education was introduced. Children were well schooled in legal affairs generally and their own civil rights. They were also taught about the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international legal instruments.
5. All schools in Tajikistan were set up in such a way as to be conducive to learning. Under the Constitution of Tajikistan, which was a democratic and secular State, there was no corporal punishment. Teachers who violated children's rights could be prosecuted. There were, however, no educational establishments where such abuse had occurred. Tajikistan had one special school, catering for 40 young offenders or children lacking parental care. The President had recently given orders for the drafting of a new law on the responsibility of parents for the upbringing of their children.
6. The Tajik health system provided free medical care in State health institutions, spending on which had risen from US\$ 1.8 per head in 2002 to US\$ 10.3 per head in 2008. In accordance with the National Development Strategy, the main aim in the area of health was gradually to reduce child and infant mortality, infectious disease and the elimination of a number of vaccine-preventable diseases. Priority was given to improving primary medical health care, developing family medicine, changing the system for financing health and improving medical and pharmaceutical education.

7. Between 1990 and 2005, maternal mortality had fallen by almost two thirds, from 97.7 to 33.3 per 100,000 live births. With a view to reducing infant morbidity and mortality, World Health Organization (WHO) standards on assessing the physical development of children under five had been introduced. Tajikistan's support for breastfeeding had been recognized by WHO in 1998. Considerable success had also been achieved with the prevention and treatment of vaccine-preventable diseases. In 2002 Tajikistan had been certified free of poliomyelitis. Vaccination against measles had been effective: over the past three years there had been only a few cases of the disease. In order to improve the quality of medical services for children, the Government had established a children's rehabilitation centre, catering for 40 children, on 1 October 2008. In 2001, Tajikistan had become a party to the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS. The relevant authority at the national level was the National Coordinating Committee on the Prevention and Treatment of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The Committee had a standing secretariat, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister.

8. A range of measures was being taken to improve the situation of vulnerable children. To that end, budgetary allocations for children were increased annually. In 2007, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection had set up a department for the social protection of the family and children. Technical and financial support for the department was principally provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). There were social assistance units in 46 districts, which provided parents with preventive advice in the home. With support from the European Commission, four day-centres had been set up for children with learning difficulties. There was also a national rehabilitation centre, where disabled children and their parents could receive training on care in the home.

9. The Government, determined to develop its democracy, held to its strong commitments on human rights and freedoms, in accordance with international law. In 2009, it had established the office of the human rights Ombudsman, with a view to strengthening democratic institutions in the State and society. Importance was also attached to the education of the younger generation and the prevention of antisocial behaviour. To that end, a juvenile crime department had been established. Legislation had been introduced in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including laws on juvenile crime prevention as well as various administrative acts relating to young people.

10. The foundations had been laid for a system of juvenile justice. The first results of reforms were beginning to come through. The use of detention as a punishment had decreased and the data showed that, in districts where alternative juvenile justice projects had been implemented, crime levels among young people had been reduced by half. Moreover, in response to the recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Government had adopted a national plan of action on the reform of the juvenile justice system for the period 2010–2015. In that connection, she noted that the Tajik Committee on Children's Rights, together with UNICEF and the Committee for Women and the Family, had drawn up a pilot project in 2007 on the establishment of a service to support girls needing assistance.

11. Gradual progress was being made. The Government was showing willingness to conduct a dialogue with the international organizations, and particularly with the United Nations, in a constructive spirit, with a view to attaining the Millennium Development Goals. The future belonged to children and Tajikistan attached the highest priority to the education of the coming generation.

12. **Mr. Puras** (Country Rapporteur) said that the aim of the dialogue between the Committee and the State party was to assist Tajikistan improve the quality of life of its children. He had been encouraged by the spirit of self-critical analysis in the State party's report, which indicated an emerging capacity among the States of Central and Eastern

Europe and Central Asia to recognize and reflect problems rather than hide them, as in the past. He was also encouraged by the clear identification and prioritizing of existing obstacles and challenges, such as the high levels of poverty, different attitudes to boys and girls, the consequences of the civil war, the deficiencies of infrastructure, ignorance of the law and inadequately developed juvenile justice and child care systems. The numerous legislative measures initiated by the Government were impressive, but the greatest challenge lay in the level of implementation, monitoring and coordination of the various activities and programmes. Tajikistan had achieved some progress but the impediments to progressive and sustainable development remained daunting.

13. He had been involved in many activities in post-Soviet countries to help them use their new-found independence to develop democracy and the rule of law. The lack of financial resources was of course a serious problem, especially in Tajikistan, where over 60 per cent of people still lived in poverty. If the political will existed, however, much could be achieved, even with limited financial possibilities. The transformation in Tajikistan was proving difficult: the former system had collapsed but the new system was not yet established. The sad paradox was that in many countries in the region, including Tajikistan, limited resources were too often used for the least effective services, such as large residential institutions for children. He trusted that the Committee would help the State party to move forward.

14. He had a number of specific points to raise. He wished to know who monitored implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and how. The Committee was aware that the Commission on Children's Rights had been established in 2001 and the position of human rights Ombudsman in 2009. It seemed, however, that the Commission was lacking in staff and resources for the effective monitoring at either national or local level of legislative and other measures. He asked how often the Commission met, what bodies were responsible for monitoring at the local level, whether there was a permanent staff at either national or local level and whether there was a complaints mechanism for children. He also wished to know what independent monitoring existed for the children's Ombudsman and what plans there were to strengthen monitoring mechanisms.

15. Strengthening civil society was a basic precondition for the successful implementation of the Convention and Tajikistan had many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the field of children's rights. He wondered what measures were taken by the Government to support them and to involve them not only in implementation but also in decision-making and policy formulation. Budget allocations for health and education remained disproportionately low in Tajikistan and he asked whether a public debate on budget priorities existed and whether NGOs were in a position to lobby for increased budgets.

16. As the report stated, three advisory children's groups had been established, each composed of 24 to 40 children, to contribute in a participatory way in the implementation of the Convention. He asked how the children concerned had been selected and whether they included children from vulnerable groups. He also asked what measures had been taken to implement the right of children to be heard. He asked what legal and other measures had been taken to guarantee that children, especially those in State institutions, could enjoy the right to privacy and how and by whom that right was protected and monitored in Tajikistan. Lastly, he asked what measures had been taken to promote better access by children, especially in remote rural areas, to information and, conversely, to shield children from harmful information.

17. **Ms. Villarán de la Puente** said that it was essential for resources to be allocated to children's affairs; yet Tajikistan faced a difficult situation with many children living in poverty. She wondered what proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) was devoted to children. According to some sources, 1.6 per cent of GDP went on children's affairs and 3.8

per cent on education. If correct, that figure was very low, and she wondered what would be done to rectify the situation. The State party's report mentioned a variety of areas, including the staffing of the courts, violence against children, access to drinking water and problems with birth registration, that required attention and she asked how the Government set its priorities. Noting that remittances from Tajik nationals — mostly women — working abroad had fallen by 30 per cent, she asked whether the Government had provided subsidies to protect budgets for children from the effects of the global financial crisis. If there had been cuts, she wondered how specifically children had been affected. In that connection, she asked how the impact of the subsidies was evaluated and how budgets were protected from being diverted by corruption.

18. **Ms. Ortiz** asked how further progress could be made in changing adults' attitudes towards children and increasing children's knowledge of their rights. She also asked how information on children's rights was disseminated in Tajikistan, given that different languages were spoken within the country. She would like to know how the Government worked with the media to ensure that its work on the rights of the child was backed up by respectful treatment of children in articles and programmes. Also what were the possibilities for children to participate in the media? Lastly, was the subject of children's rights included in university courses and was it a compulsory subject?

19. **Ms. Aidoo** requested more information on efforts by the State party to combat the discriminatory attitudes and practices of families, religious bodies and communities against girls and on concrete achievements in that area. She asked the delegation to comment on reports of discrimination by families and professionals against children with disabilities and children in rural areas and wondered what the State party was doing to prevent such discrimination, to improve basic services to those children and to ensure social inclusion for all children.

20. She asked how the State party planned to achieve a full birth registration rate, for example, whether it had considered making registration free for all children and establishing mobile registration units for remote areas or registration units in health centres or schools.

21. She enquired whether any studies had been undertaken in the State party on the prevalence of different forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment. She requested information on how different groups of children were affected by violence, for example boys and girls, children in institutions or children in rural areas, and what measures, aside from legislative measures, the State party was implementing to encourage parents, families and communities to use non-violent means of disciplining children.

22. **Mr. Citarella** asked whether any courts in Tajikistan had applied the Convention's provisions in civil and criminal cases that involved children. He would like details of the proposed creation of a family court and wondered whether that project would be approved and adopted soon. Lastly, he asked for clarification on the legal age for marriage, sexual consent and criminal responsibility.

23. **Mr. Gurán** asked whether a mechanism existed to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Convention. He also requested information on the composition of the Commission on the Rights of the Child and on how it had developed. He wondered how the Commission cooperated with NGOs and whether they were represented at its meetings. He asked whether the national plan of action for the protection of the rights and interests of the child for the period 2003–2010 had been evaluated and monitored. He also enquired whether a new programme would be created to continue the work of that plan in the future and, if so, what its priorities would be.

24. He asked whether the office of the Ombudsman functioned in compliance with the Paris Principles. He wondered how many people worked for that office and whether the

staff included any specialists in children's rights. He also asked whether it had a mechanism to receive complaints about violations of children's rights occurring in the State party. Lastly, he asked the delegation about the data collection system in Tajikistan and whether the State party had adequate disaggregated data on infant and maternal mortality and its causes.

25. **Ms. Al-Asmar** asked for more information on the administrative and judicial proceedings for separating a child from its parents, in particular with regard to the measures taken by courts and administrative authorities. She also asked whether the State party had developed a systematic policy to increase public awareness of and respect for the right of children to participate in community life and express their views.

26. **Mr. Kotrane** asked whether the State party was planning to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Hague Conventions. He wondered whether legal decisions relating to adoption and family matters were nullified if the child's views had not been ascertained by the judge. It would be interesting to know why a child could not carry out transactions until the age of 15. Lastly, he asked how the law allowed children to establish family links and access information about their biological family, for example through DNA testing.

27. **The Chairperson**, speaking as a member of the Committee, asked why the age of marriage had been lowered to 17 and whether there had been any debate on raising it back to 18.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.*

28. **Ms. Mirsaidova** (Tajikistan) explained that, over the previous five years, the Commission on the Rights of the Child had undergone a process of reform. In August 2008, the Commission had been created by merging the Commission on Minor's Affairs and the Commission on the Rights of the Child, as the two had often overlapped in their work. The Commission included representatives from the Ministries of Health, Education, and Labour and Social Protection, from the Government Committee on Youth Affairs, Sport and Tourism and the Government Committee on Women's and Family Issues, and from two NGOs. The ministries that were members of the Commission were responsible for developing policies on the rights of the child.

29. The Commission monitored the work of governmental bodies and issued guidelines in the field of children's rights. It also participated in the drafting of relevant legislation, for example on the living conditions and education of children and on street children and orphans. District commissions had been created throughout Tajikistan with the aim of creating departments on children's rights to monitor the implementation of the Convention at regional level.

30. The Convention had been translated into Tajik and Russian, and was disseminated by the media through special publications for children and television and radio programmes. A dedicated Tajik television channel for educational programmes had also been launched. A number of pilot projects were under way. One involved the establishment of a shelter for girls who had been victims of violence and were in need of medical, legal and social reintegration assistance. The results of the project had been very positive.

31. **Mr. Farhod Rahimov** (Tajikistan) said that article 41 of the Constitution guaranteed free primary, secondary and vocational school education. Tajikistan allocated 55 per cent of budget revenues to the funding of education, health care and social services. Whereas in 2005 allocations for education had amounted to 3.2 per cent of GDP, by 2009 that figure had risen to 4.7 per cent, with 4.7 per cent of GDP going to social services and 2 per cent to the health sector. Between 2000 and 2009, funding for education had increased

40-fold, from 42 million somoni to 1,140 million somoni. Expenditure for education had risen from 19 per cent of the budget in 2005 to 25 per cent by 2009.

32. On the question of gender equality in schools, he said that of the 1,700,000 pupils in middle schools 47 per cent were girls. In secondary and vocational schools, they accounted for 33 per cent of pupils, a percentage which had been increasing.

33. As to educational programmes on human rights, including the rights of the child, he said that compulsory courses on government and law included a number of hours on the rights of children, sex education and family relations. Several legal courses at institutes of higher learning had components devoted to the rights of children. Teachers attended seminars and training courses that focused on the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A number of refresher courses and seminars on the subject were funded by the State, international organizations and NGOs. Article 41 of the Education Act provided that teachers must respect the dignity of pupils and students and protect children and adolescents from any form of physical or psychological violence.

34. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as member of the Committee, wondered whether the increase in absolute terms in budgetary allocations for education was not due in part to inflation and to the growing number of pupils. She also asked the delegation to comment on reports that some schools charged fees.

35. **Mr. Farhod Rahimov** (Tajikistan) said that although inflation did have an impact, the number of pupils had in fact remained virtually unchanged, at about 1,700,000, over the past four years. Tajikistan had approximately 100 fee-paying private schools, but 90 per cent of the country's schools were public and thus free of charge.

36. **Mr. Citarella** asked whether school supplies, textbooks and the like were also free.

37. **Mr. Farhod Rahimov** (Tajikistan) said that primary and secondary education was free of charge. In addition, young women and men from poor families and rural areas received government scholarships to study in institutes of higher learning. In 2009, a total of 1,150 such grants had been awarded, half of them to women.

38. **Ms. Jobirova** (Tajikistan) said that a reform was under way in the health sector to apply a per capita principle to health-care expenditure in order to achieve savings and a better distribution of budgetary resources. Despite the financial crisis, the State guaranteed an annual per capita increase of funding for health care of 50 per cent. Tajikistan was cooperating closely with international financial institutions, which provided it with grants and credits for initiatives in the health-care sector.

39. Maternal and infant mortality was high in Tajikistan, but over the past 10 years the rate had been gradually declining. In 1993, mortality of newborns had stood at 47 per 1,000, whereas by 2008 it had fallen to 16 per 1,000. According to studies carried out by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in 2000 infant mortality had stood at 8.6 per 1,000 and had fallen to 4.6 per 1,000 by 2008. Maternal mortality was also decreasing. Tajikistan was conducting a number of programmes to provide assistance to newborns and mothers so as to further reduce infant and maternal mortality rates and help meet the country's Millennium Development Goals for 2015.

40. A national plan on safe motherhood had been adopted in 2008 to address the causes of maternal mortality, namely: poor infrastructure, obsolete technology and lack of equipment; a shortage of medical staff and inadequate training; and a population that was poorly informed about hygiene and motherhood. Over the past five years, newborn, infant and maternal mortality rates had been falling, thanks in particular to the focus on reforming primary care and restructuring the hospital system so as to make better use of available budgetary and material resources.

41. **Mr. Ramazon Rahimov** (Tajikistan) said that a government agency had been set up to combat corruption and conduct monitoring of financial operations. A department within the Ministry of the Interior was responsible for combating organized crime. Over the past two years, the courts had dealt with a number of cases of misappropriation of funds initially earmarked for education and health care. The Criminal Code provided for punishment of persons who committed economic crimes and officials guilty of abuse of power.

42. The Criminal Code and the Administrative Code prohibited corporal punishment. Pursuant to the Family Code, persons who inflicted physical or other harm on their children could be deprived of their parental rights. Such cases had occurred, and the perpetrators had been brought to justice. The child protection services conducted monitoring activities to ensure that children were not subjected to ill-treatment by teachers or any other persons working with children. The new Code of Criminal Procedure, to enter into force in April, had a section on juvenile justice that greatly improved the manner in which cases involving children were dealt with and provided for alternative forms of punishment for minors.

43. **Mr. Khudoyarov** (Tajikistan) said that international legal instruments to which Tajikistan was a party were incorporated into the national legal system; they were subject to the Constitution but took primacy over domestic law. The provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were reflected in national legislation, including in the Family Code, the Criminal Code, the Civil Code, the Code of Civil Procedure and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

44. The provisions of the Convention were implemented in the courts: in September 2002, the Supreme Court had ruled that the courts must take into account that the Convention itself, the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict constituted an integral part of the national legal system. A number of civil cases had involved the application of the Convention, in particular in connection with adoption.

45. According to the Family Code, children had the right to be heard on matters affecting them from the age of 10. The minimum age for marriage was 17 for both women and men. In exceptional cases, a court could lower the age by one year.

46. **Ms. Aidoo** asked under what circumstances the marriageable age could be reduced. She noted that the age of sexual consent was 16.

47. **Mr. Khudoyarov** (Tajikistan) said that, since the law did not specify what exceptional circumstances could be brought before the courts, the decision to allow a 16-year-old boy or girl to marry lay at the discretion of the judge. A bill to increase the marriageable age to 18 years was currently being drafted. Several instruments of domestic legislation clearly established the definition of the child as a person under the age of 18. While individuals who married prior to the age of 18 were considered adults for the purposes of civil law, they maintained their status of minors under criminal law.

48. Annual statistics on births, marriages and deaths had been compiled at the national level since 1998. In 1990, legislation had been adopted allowing people living in remote areas to register births, marriages and deaths with the local authorities. While the reduction in the fee for a birth certificate from US\$ 3 to US\$ 0.75 had resulted in a significant increase in the number of births being registered, he agreed that the fee should be abolished altogether.

49. **Mr. Puras** (Country Rapporteur) asked what measures the State party had taken to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children. It would be useful to learn about relevant legislation, steps to raise awareness of the problem and assistance provided to child victims of sexual abuse or exploitation.



50. He requested additional information on efforts made to reduce the number of children with disabilities currently living in large institutions and provide them with community-based care. In particular, he asked which body was responsible for coordinating those efforts. It would be useful to have details of any evaluations that had been carried out in that field. The Committee would welcome information on any steps taken to give early assistance to children with disabilities. That was especially important as many concerns for children with disabilities arose in early childhood, and could be adequately addressed only with good data collection.

51. He wished to know whether support services were available to the families of children with disabilities. He requested clarification of the data in paragraph 296 of the periodic report, where the number of children with mental disabilities quoted was unusually low. He asked whether children with disabilities who lived with their parents attended mainstream or special schools, and whether those living in institutions received education in the institutions. In general, it would be useful to learn how far the State party had managed to move away from the Soviet model of regarding disability as a medical condition, with children being classified as “educable” or “non-educable”. He requested updated information on the training of professionals in special education.

52. The Committee would welcome clarification of the Government’s position on children’s health and the resources it would allocate to improving further the indicators that had been reported. He asked whether the children’s health-care programmes currently being implemented were sustainable and if they were being monitored. He asked for additional information concerning the general policy on children’s health, particularly primary health care. It would be useful to learn about the situation regarding access to good quality drinking water and measures taken in that regard. Lastly, he asked which body was providing at least minimal mental health services for children and young people and how such services were being delivered.

53. **Ms. Ortiz** requested additional information on the support available to parents requiring assistance and the help provided by the State to parents who encountered difficulties. It would be useful to learn what steps the State party was taking to change the population’s mindset away from the tendency to institutionalize children when problems arose. She asked what programmes and services were available at the local or municipal level to support families. She recommended that the State party should consult the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children that had been approved by the United Nations General Assembly in November 2009. It would also be useful for the Government to study the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption in the process of amending its legislation on adoption, in order to ensure that the best interests of the child were upheld in all cases. While the State party did not allow intercountry adoption, that instrument provided important guidance on formulating legislation on adoption, supplementing the provisions of article 21 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

54. **Ms. Al-Asmar** asked what measures were taken to prevent children being institutionalized if their parents left the country. What steps had been taken to improve the infrastructure and the services provided in institutions caring for children?

55. While commending the Government’s efforts to provide education for all, she asked what measures had been put in place to ensure that children received quality education at school, thus avoiding the need for private tuition. It would be useful to know whether the education provided prepared children for life after school and for the labour market. She also wished to know what efforts were made in schools to break down gender stereotypes.

56. **Mr. Citarella** asked what progress had been made in drafting a new children’s code and when the new instrument would be ready for adoption. It would be useful to learn what efforts had been taken to establish specialized juvenile courts or special sections for

juvenile justice in mainstream courts. The Committee would welcome information on how the State party planned to ensure that children were no longer detained together with adults in pretrial detention or when serving prison sentences. It would be interesting to hear what was being done to ensure that children who had to appear in court were protected from victimization.

57. **Mr. Kotrane** requested further details on the treatment of children by the criminal justice system. While the age of criminal liability was 14 years, it was unclear what measures were taken when children under that age were in conflict with the law.

58. He asked whether the imposition of community service on children as a form of punishment did not contradict the provisions of International Labour Organization Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour. It would also be useful to learn whether the minimum age at which children could begin work, as specified in the State party's labour law, was applicable to the informal sector. He urged the State party to determine in its legislation the types of work from which children were excluded, in line with the provisions of International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

59. While welcoming the State party's efforts to assist refugees from Afghanistan, he asked what steps the State party planned to take to ensure that the rules restricting refugees' right to movement did not prevent refugee children from enjoying the right to education and health services.

60. **Ms. Villarán de la Puente** requested additional information on measures to combat violence against women and girls. The problem was reportedly acute because women were still considered inferior to men, domestic violence was treated as a private matter, and early marriage, unregistered marriages and polygamy continued to prevail. She asked whether the draft law on domestic violence had been approved, making such violence a criminal offence in the State party. She also wished to know whether the police, prosecutors and judges were properly trained to deal with cases of domestic violence and whether systems were in place to protect and rehabilitate victims of violence.

61. Lastly, she asked what measures had been taken since 1997 to demilitarize children who had participated in the civil war and to help children and young people to recover from the trauma of the conflict.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*