



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

Distr.: General
5 November 2019

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women
Seventy-fourth session**

Summary record of the 1731st meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 29 October 2019, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Ameline (Vice-Chair)

Contents

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

Sixth periodic report of Cambodia (continued)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.

GE.19-18693 (E) 051119 051119



* 1 9 1 8 6 9 3 *

Please recycle The recycling symbol, consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.



Ms. Ameline (Vice-Chair) took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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

Sixth periodic report of Cambodia (continued) (CEDAW/C/KHM/6; CEDAW/C/KHM/Q/6 and CEDAW/C/KHM/Q/6/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Cambodia took places at the Committee table.*

Articles 7 to 9 (continued)

2. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that women were considered to be the backbone of Cambodian society and the national economy. There were plans to introduce flexible working arrangements, such as part-time work and flexible working hours, to help women reconcile work and family life. Since part-time work for women was a novel concept in Cambodia, efforts to raise public awareness of the need for women to enjoy a work-life balance would also be necessary. Additional budgetary resources had also been allocated for the establishment of new community-based day-care centres. In Cambodia, the extended family often helped to shoulder child-rearing responsibilities, thus allowing women to work outside the home. Efforts were also being made to encourage boys and men to take on more household responsibilities.

3. The gradual easing of the burden on women would enable a greater number of them to assume leadership positions. Deputy governors were required to change posts every few years in order to reduce the risk of nepotism and corruption. Due to the upheaval caused by having to move to a different province, female deputy governors with a family were allowed to choose the district or province to which they would be posted. Women who scored the same as men in the entry examination for the judicial training academy had priority of admission. In order to attract more women to judicial professions, certain posts included guaranteed housing. The possibility of building housing for governors and deputy governors was also being considered.

4. Women currently accounted for 14 per cent of all judges, 13 per cent of all prosecutors, 20 per cent of all lawyers and just under 15 per cent of the members of the Bar Association of the Kingdom of Cambodia. In 2019, women accounted for 55 per cent of new recruits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. A new diplomatic academy had recently been opened to provide core training to new recruits wishing to enter the diplomatic service and ongoing training to civil servants who were already in post and wished to upgrade their skills. In 2017, women had accounted for 25 per cent of serving ambassadors and for just under 25 per cent of diplomatic staff. It was therefore perfectly possible for Cambodian women to have a career in the diplomatic service. Cambodian women had also taken part in a number of United Nations peacekeeping missions, including mine clearance projects. From 2016 to 2017, just over 200 Cambodian women had been deployed in eight countries where they had served as mine clearance experts, civil engineers and medical or security personnel.

5. **Ms. Akizuki** said that she was pleased to note that the Law on Nationality guaranteed Cambodian women the right to determine their nationality, retain it regardless of who they married and transmit it to their children, and that efforts had been made to increase birth registration in the State party, including through technological means. Since nationality was the basis for civil and political rights and access to basic social services, it would be useful to receive statistical data on the number of stateless persons and persons of unknown nationality in Cambodia. Noting that the Law on Nationality had been amended in 2018, she asked what the purpose of that amendment had been and whether it benefited stateless persons, including women belonging to ethnic minority groups and women of Vietnamese origin. It was also her understanding that, under the amended Law on Nationality, even children born to foreign parents could obtain Cambodian nationality, provided that their parents were legally resident in the country. The delegation should confirm whether that was indeed the case.

6. Despite the 30-day deadline for registering all new births, in 2014, around 18 per cent of children between 0 and 4 years of age and 26 per cent of children under 5 years of age still did not have a birth certificate or proof of registration. She would be interested to know whether those children were now properly registered. The Committee had received reports that mothers belonging to ethnic minority groups and mothers of Vietnamese origin still experienced difficulties in obtaining birth certificates for their children born in Cambodia and in obtaining a national identity card for themselves. She asked what steps the State party had taken to expedite the registration of the children born to those women in order to guarantee them Cambodian nationality in keeping with the related national strategy and whether it planned to ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in the near future.

7. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that no statistical data on the number of stateless persons or persons of unknown nationality in Cambodia were currently available, as such persons were likely to have entered the country illegally. The Government remained committed to respecting the rights of migrants who came to Cambodia through lawful channels. The revised Law on Nationality provided that any child born to a foreign mother and father who had been living legally in Cambodia could obtain Cambodian nationality provided that the applicable legal requirements were met. The granting of Cambodian nationality to children born to refugee mothers was dealt with under Cambodian refugee law. A ministerial decision guaranteeing children not born in Cambodia access to basic services had been issued.

8. While it was true that a child's birth should normally be registered within 30 days, a special birth certificate could be issued after that deadline had passed. The special certificate was equal in value to a normal birth certificate in that it guaranteed the child access to all the same basic services. The Committee had likely been misinformed about the difficulties that mothers belonging to ethnic minority groups and mothers of Vietnamese origin allegedly faced in obtaining birth certificates for their children born in Cambodia. A new migration regulation had been introduced under which the status of all foreign nationals living in Cambodia had to be reviewed and those found to be in the country unlawfully had to be repatriated to their country of origin. Foreign nationals living legally in the country were guaranteed access to the same basic services as Cambodian nationals. It was hoped that, in time, the introduction of a computerized birth registration system would help to increase the birth registration rate. Although the transition to the new system had caused some delays in birth registration in certain provinces, there was no discrimination against foreign nationals. The Ministry of the Interior was in the process of examining the possible obstacles and legislative changes associated with ratifying the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and planned to ask other States parties to those Conventions about their experience as part of that exercise.

9. **Ms. Manalo** asked whether, under Cambodian law, a foreign man who married a Cambodian woman could automatically acquire Cambodian nationality.

10. **Ms. Reddock** asked whether Cambodian universities offered women's studies or gender studies programmes and what challenges had been identified during the review of the second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2014–2018.

11. **Ms. Leinarte** said it was her understanding that, in Cambodia, prostitution was legal in private settings and that women who provided sexual services in their own home were not therefore liable to punishment or prosecution. The delegation should confirm whether her understanding was correct and indicate whether there was a specific mechanism in place for identifying victims of trafficking, as she had reason to believe that, in practice, the State party often conflated trafficking victims with undocumented migrants.

12. **Mr. Kim** (Cambodia) said that a foreign man who was married to a Cambodian woman still had to meet the criteria for the acquisition of Cambodian citizenship set out in the Law on Nationality, which included having lived legally in Cambodia for at least seven years.

13. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that a number of Cambodian universities offered gender studies courses at master's level and conducted social research on gender issues.

14. **Ms. Nhean** (Cambodia) said that the shortcomings identified during the review of the second National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2014–2018 included the limited dissemination of the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims (Domestic Violence Law) on account of competing deadlines and priorities, and the limited effectiveness of the Plan’s monitoring and evaluation framework owing to the scarcity of baseline data at its launch and conclusion, which had prevented a reliable comparative data analysis from being conducted. Several shortcomings identified at the midterm review stage would be addressed in the third iteration of the Plan, which was expected to be adopted by the end of the year.

15. **Mr. Kim** (Cambodia) said that, although prostitution was not technically illegal in Cambodia, it was prohibited in the public sphere. Women flouting that prohibition could be taken into police custody and incur the penalties provided for by law. Women who engaged in prostitution in the privacy of their own home were not liable to punishment, as the penalties provided for by law were reserved for cases involving sexual exploitation.

16. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that, upon apprehending an individual who was found to be in Cambodia unlawfully, the authorities applied the Guidelines on Forms and Procedures for Identification of Victims of Human Trafficking for Appropriate Services Provision (2015) to determine whether the case involved trafficking or illegal entry without trafficking. In the former case, the individual was treated as a victim and was provided with specialized support and repatriated to his or her country of origin without punishment. However, migrants who had entered the country illegally were dealt with under Cambodian immigration law and could incur criminal penalties.

Articles 10 to 14

17. **Ms. Song** said that, while the State party was to be commended on its efforts to introduce free and compulsory primary and secondary education and to promote health and sexuality education and vocational training, the low enrolment rate of girls in secondary and higher education and the high dropout rate among girls from poor families and girls living in rural areas remained a cause for concern. She wished to know whether there was a mechanism in place to oversee the effective implementation of the various policies and strategies intended to improve education opportunities for women and girls mentioned in the delegation’s opening statement, what proportion of the annual budget was allocated to education and what was being done to reach out to parents who did not send their girls to school.

18. Child marriage and teenage pregnancy were two of the greatest obstacles to girls’ education in Cambodia, particularly in Ratanakiri province, which had the highest rate of child marriage in the country. It was also her understanding that some communes did not have a lower or upper secondary school on account of their remote geographical location and small population. She would like to hear more about the results achieved under the Action Plan to Prevent Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Ratanakiri Province (2017–2021), the measures taken to guarantee girls living in those communes access to lower and upper secondary education and, if they were required to travel to a different commune to attend school, the financial assistance available to help cover their travel expenses and the measures taken to guarantee their safety on the way to and from school.

19. She was pleased to note that the State party had taken a number of steps to upgrade its technical and vocational training and life skills programmes to ensure that they better responded to the needs of students, including girls who might not continue their studies after they had completed their secondary education. It would be helpful to know whether those programmes were regularly assessed to ensure that they were gender-sensitive, actually empowered girls and did not reinforce traditional gender stereotypes, and whether girls who could not attend university could read for a degree through an adult education centre.

20. **Mr. Nath** (Cambodia) said that the Government was working with a number of stakeholders, including parents, to try to identify obstacles to women and girls remaining in education. In an effort to overcome those obstacles it was, for example, providing scholarships for poor families and introducing multilingual classes for ethnic minorities

unable to follow classes in the official languages; and for students with disabilities, it had introduced a policy on inclusive education and specialist training for teachers. In rural and isolated areas, multigrade education was provided and accommodation was made available for teachers. In Ratanakiri Province, a pilot project was being run to increase access to lower secondary school, which was to be extended to other rural areas. In addition, under Sustainable Development Goal 4, the Government ran life skills programmes and had recently adopted a policy on lifelong learning. The Government aimed to increase the proportion of the national budget devoted to education from 18 per cent to at least 20 per cent by 2030.

21. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that, in addition, the Ministry of Women's Affairs provided training for women who had dropped out of formal education.

22. **The Chair**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said that she wondered what education policies the Government would implement to encourage girls to study subjects including technology, so that they could later play a central role in tackling the numerous challenges posed by climate change.

23. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that the school curriculum now covered the issue of climate change.

24. **Mr. Bergby** said that, despite the Government's efforts, gender inequality persisted in employment, with most women working in the informal economy and low paid jobs. In that connection, he wondered whether the Government would amend the Labour Law's definition of equal pay, in line with the Convention and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100). The Government had increased the minimum wage in the garment and footwear industries and employers were required to contribute to the National Social Security Fund so as to ensure that workers had injury insurance and access to health care. However, it appeared that a number of so-called sweatshops were not officially registered so did not contribute to the Fund. He wondered, therefore, whether that requirement for employers to pay into the Fund embraced all industries and all types of contract.

25. The free public transport for workers commuting to Phnom Penh remained largely unsafe. He wondered whether the Government would regulate public transport for workers travelling to factories outside the city and whether the National Social Security Fund included injury insurance for people travelling to work by public transport. That year, the Prime Minister had reportedly advised the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training to permit male garment workers to take up to a week's paid leave on the birth of their children. Had that proposal been implemented? He would also like to receive more information about a planned pension for workers in the garment sector, referred to during the 2019 universal periodic review.

26. The widespread use of fixed duration contracts in the garment industry had a negative impact on women. They risked not having their contracts renewed if they became pregnant or joined a trade union, for example. They were also vulnerable to sexual exploitation by their managers in order to have their contracts renewed. He would like to know, therefore, whether the Government would consider repealing an instruction issued by the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training in May 2019, extending the length of time for which employers could use such contracts; or would the Government actually limit the number of times a fixed duration contract could be renewed before it became a contract of indefinite duration? He also wondered whether Cambodia would ratify the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), since domestic workers in Cambodia were not currently protected by the Labour Law.

27. The Labour Law and the Criminal Code did not comprehensively address the issue of sexual harassment and one in five garment workers had reported being subject to sexual harassment at work, according to a study by the International Labour Organization (ILO). He wondered whether the Government would establish an independent complaints mechanism to investigate and respond to individual complaints of harassment; whether it planned to run relevant awareness-raising and prevention programmes and whether it would ratify the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).

28. **Ms. Sovann** (Cambodia) said that the labour inspection groups currently struggled to identify discrimination in the workplace due to their limited capacity. The definition of equal pay under the Labour Law complied with the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) and the Committee's Convention. The term "remuneration" had likely been inaccurately translated into English. The delegation would, therefore, clarify the Cambodian definition of equal pay after the constructive dialogue.

29. Employers with more than eight employees were obliged to contribute to the National Social Security Fund. Under the new Law on Social Security Schemes, which the Government hoped to have promulgated by the King by the end of 2019, all employers would have to register their workers to give them social security coverage. In addition, workers in both the private and public sectors would enjoy full social protection, including pensions.

30. A committee for the safe transportation of factory workers, in collaboration with several Government bodies, trained and tested drivers on road safety.

31. In addition to one day's paid paternity leave, fathers could use their annual leave – a possibility that was gaining in popularity.

32. The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training had issued an Instruction in May 2019 to clarify that the maximum total duration of a fixed duration contract was four years, including the duration of the first such contract and its subsequent single or multiple renewals. Employers had to allow at least one month between such contracts for workers carrying out the same or similar work. Exceeding the total duration of four years or not respecting the one-month grace period would lead to the conversion of the fixed duration contract into a contract of indefinite duration. While the Government acknowledged that legal loopholes might benefit either party to a contract, it could not oblige employers to use a particular type of contract. It therefore gave the parties the freedom to choose between contracts of fixed and indefinite duration.

33. Women on maternity leave who were covered by the National Social Security Fund were entitled to more than half pay. The Government would seek technical assistance from the ILO with a view to ratifying, for example, the ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and the ILO Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).

34. **Ms. Manalo** said that she wondered how the Government planned to boost the number of women studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics, since only 28 per cent of female students currently studied those subjects. She also wondered whether the Government would introduce a minimum wage for workers in the construction industry and what measures it would take to protect the rights of migrant domestic workers who reportedly faced exploitation and physical abuse.

35. **Mr. Bergby** said that employers had more power than employees when it came to choosing between fixed and indefinite duration contracts. He wondered whether the Government would take that into account in order to better regulate the use of fixed duration contracts. Could it conduct a survey on their use and misuse in order to identify possible problems? He also wondered whether labour inspectors' findings could be disseminated among workers in order to maximize their impact.

36. **Mr. Nath** (Cambodia) said that the Government was developing education policies on science, technology, engineering and mathematics and that, in higher education, women currently accounted for 14 per cent of students enrolled in those subjects. At secondary school level, the proportion of girls studying science had increased from 45 per cent in 2013 to 56 per cent in 2019.

37. **Ms. Sovann** (Cambodia) said that, with the recent creation of the National Minimum Wage Council, the Government would take steps to introduce a minimum wage for additional industries, including construction.

38. The Government strove to ensure that its nationals emigrating as domestic workers understood their rights and went through private agencies, rather than informal channels. Equally, it ensured that those agencies were aware of their liabilities. In addition, representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training actively supported

Cambodian domestic workers in a number of States in the region, including Thailand and Malaysia.

39. **Ms. Chalal** said that the Committee was concerned to note that, according to the results of the demographic and health survey conducted in 2014, the maternal mortality rate in Cambodia was the highest in the region. It was also concerned by regional disparities in the availability of health-care facilities and by the lack of doctors, medical assistants, anaesthetists, nurses and midwives in some areas. In view of that situation, she asked what action would be taken to increase the number of trained health-care staff and to overcome regional disparities in access to health care.

40. A high proportion of maternal deaths were caused by the lack of access to abortion services and by the low level of awareness, particularly in certain provinces, of the legal status of abortion. The lives of women with disabilities, victims of rape and persons living in remote areas were adversely affected by the shortage of policies and guidelines on women's sexual health and reproductive rights. In the light of that situation, she wondered what measures would be taken to raise women's awareness of their right to safe abortions. Would the Government consider launching a website to inform and advise teenagers on matters related to sexual and reproductive health?

41. In view of the fact that the teenage pregnancy rate had risen between 2010 and 2014, she asked what steps would be taken to promote the use of contraception among teenagers and to challenge the social and cultural attitudes that prevented such use. Noting that the age of sexual consent was 15 years while the age at which medical treatment could be obtained without parental consent was 18 years, she asked whether the Government would consider harmonizing that discrepancy in order to ensure that teenagers had access to contraceptives. The Committee would be interested to hear whether, under phase IV of the National Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive and Multi-sectoral Response to HIV/AIDS, free medical treatment for HIV/AIDS would be provided to women on low incomes and women belonging to vulnerable groups. The delegation might describe the measures that would be taken to provide non-discriminatory sexual and reproductive health services to all women, including women living with HIV/AIDS, women who were lesbian, bisexual, transgender or intersex, women with disabilities, women in detention, women drug addicts and women sex workers. Did victims of rape in the State party have access to post-exposure prophylaxis?

42. Given that the incidence of cervical cancer was relatively high in the State party, the Committee wished to know what strategies had been put in place to prevent that disease, how many women were affected by it and whether women had access to screening for human papillomavirus infection. It would be interesting to learn whether the bill on gestational surrogacy mentioned in the State party's report ([CEDAW/C/KHM/6](#), para. 12) would result in a total ban on that practice or whether surrogacy would be authorized within a legal framework based on respect for human rights, the best interests of the child and the protection of the mental and physical health of surrogate mothers.

43. **Ms. Prak** (Cambodia) said that the Government had prioritized the issue of child and maternal health. Since the adoption of the Abortion Law in 1997, all women had enjoyed access to safe abortions up to the twelfth week of pregnancy. After the twelfth week, abortion was legal only if the pregnancy posed a threat to the woman's life or if the unborn child had an incurable disease. In accordance with the National Strategy for Reproductive and Sexual Health 2017–2020, efforts were being made to reduce the number of unsafe abortions and increase access to abortion services. The Fast Track Initiative Road Map for Reducing Maternal and Newborn Mortality 2016–2020 had identified unsafe abortion as one of the key issues to be tackled in the Government's efforts to bring down the maternal mortality rate. In that regard, health-care staff were being trained to deliver abortion services in public health facilities. As of 2018, over 600 such facilities in every province in the country were providing safe abortion services and post-abortion care. In the same year, nearly 10,000 safe abortions had been carried out while more than 12,000 women had had spontaneous abortions. The fertility rate had fallen significantly between 2000 and 2014. Data on abortion, disaggregated by age, would be made available from 2020.

44. In accordance with government policy, every woman had the right to the highest attainable standard of physical health and every effort was made to ensure that men and women enjoyed equal access to health-care services, including in the area of reproductive health. In accordance with a policy on birth spacing adopted in 1995, women and couples had the right to determine the number and spacing of their children. Around 60 per cent of the 1,200 health clinics in Cambodia provided at least five methods of contraception, including intrauterine devices and contraceptive implants, while over 30 per cent provided at least three such methods. Contraception was also made available in hospitals. Since 2018, the Government had used several mechanisms to ensure that affordable reproductive health services were made available to women on low incomes, factory workers, civil servants and retirees.

45. **Ms. Chalal** said that she wished to know what steps were being taken to reduce malnutrition rates among teenagers and rural women.

46. **Ms. Verges**, noting that the economic growth rate had been 7 per cent between 2014 and 2017, said that she wished to know what impact that growth had had on women's living conditions, whether socioeconomic indicators for women had improved during that period and whether the number of women living below the poverty line had fallen. It would be interesting to learn what steps were being taken to increase the participation of women, including widows and women heads of household, in income-generating activities.

47. The Committee would welcome information on any measures taken to promote entrepreneurship among women, including measures to enhance their access to low-interest loans with advantageous repayment conditions. She wondered what was being done to support couples and families who wished to develop businesses and whether efforts would be made to combat negative attitudes towards women entrepreneurs. The Committee would be interested to hear what proportion of women had access to decent housing and what proportion had been able to purchase real estate. The delegation might describe the measures being taken to produce and disseminate reliable data on the economic situation of women, including the number of women trained in entrepreneurial skills, the number of loans extended to them, the number of women company directors and the number of women benefiting from the Government's economic policies.

48. **Ms. Manalo** said that she would welcome the delegation's comments on the fact that a significant proportion of women prisoners had been sentenced for drug-related offences. She wondered why the State party had banned surrogacy when that ban adversely affected the right of couples to have a child and the rights of fathers, surrogate mothers, children born of surrogate pregnancies and agencies that arranged such pregnancies.

49. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that the economic growth experienced in recent years had boosted the employment rate for women and reduced the number of women living in poverty, including women heads of household. Although the overall unemployment rate was only 0.3 per cent, the lack of skilled labour made it necessary for skilled workers to be brought into the country from abroad. A significant proportion of poor women were working in the domestic service sector, providing unpaid care or carrying out unpaid, informal agricultural work. The Government had adopted regulations stipulating that persons with disabilities must comprise at least 2 per cent of the staff of public agencies and 1 per cent of the staff of private companies employing 100 or more workers.

50. **Mr. Chan** (Cambodia) said that the Government promoted the economic independence of women, including those working in agriculture and small businesses, by facilitating their access to microcredit and ensuring that the interest rates on such credit remained low. The Government had established that all rural women would have access to safe drinking water by 2025. The road network in rural areas was being improved in order to enhance residents' access to markets, health-care facilities and workplaces. The Government was planning to build factories close to villages in order to minimize commuting times for workers. The Ministry of Rural Development provided basic skills training to women in areas such as hairdressing, cosmetics, vegetable cultivation, furniture production and tree planting.

51. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that around 98 per cent of companies registered in Cambodia were small and medium-sized enterprises and around 65 per cent of the owners

and managers of such enterprises, and over 60 per cent of their employees, were women. The Government was developing a new gender-sensitive policy on small and medium-sized enterprises. To that end, it was taking steps to identify the needs of women entrepreneurs and examining ways of strengthening women's skills in areas such as management, accounting and technology. Measures were being taken to enable more small and medium-sized enterprises to move from the informal to the formal sector of the economy.

52. An annual forum took place at which women entrepreneurs could discuss their concerns with government officials and ensure that their views were taken into account in all relevant programmes and policies. Applications for business permits could be submitted online. Training in digital technology would be provided to women to help them to overcome their skills deficit in that area. Plans were in place to set up a fund for the promotion of entrepreneurship and a dedicated bank for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Government was considering the possibility of establishing tax exemptions for small and medium-sized enterprises.

53. **The Chair**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said that it was essential for the Government to invest in agriculture and rural areas in order to protect the human rights of persons living in those areas, including persons displaced by natural disasters.

54. **Ms. Verges**, noting that a significant proportion of women worked in micro-businesses, said that she wished to know whether any action would be taken to increase the number of women employed in medium-sized and large enterprises. What measures were being taken to address the fact that rural women applying for loans were sometimes required to put up collateral worth more than the value of the loan?

55. **Ms. Ing** (Cambodia) said that the majority of the women serving custodial sentences in Cambodia had been sentenced for drug-related offences. In order to address that situation, the Government had recently developed a policy aimed at suppressing the drug trade and raising children's awareness of the dangers of drug use.

56. The bill on surrogacy was currently being discussed by the various ministries. If the Government decided to legalize surrogacy, it would be for humanitarian rather than commercial reasons.

57. The Government recognized that the efficacy of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Convention depended on the availability of quality gender-disaggregated data. In order to remedy the shortage of such data, a number of surveys were conducted every five years, including a survey on economic indicators, a socioeconomic survey, a demographic and health survey and two surveys on gender-based violence that would serve as the basis for a national action plan on combating violence against women and children. The Government was placing increasing emphasis on the issue of gender, as reflected by the number of policies and programmes incorporating a gender perspective.

58. **The Chair**, thanking the delegation for the constructive dialogue, which had given the Committee further insight into the situation of women in Cambodia, invited the State party to accept as soon as possible the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention concerning the Committee's meeting time.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.