



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

Distr.: General
24 October 2022

Original: English

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women
Eighty-third session**

Summary record of the 1921st meeting*

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 18 October 2022, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Acosta Vargas

Contents

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

Ninth periodic report of Ukraine

* No summary records were issued for the 1919th and 1920th meetings.

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.



The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

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

Ninth periodic report of Ukraine (CEDAW/C/UKR/9; CEDAW/C/UKR/QPR/9)

1. *The Chair, welcoming the delegation of Ukraine to the meeting, explained that additional members of the delegation would be participating via video link.*
2. **The Chair**, on behalf of the Committee, expressed solidarity with the women and girls of Ukraine who had been affected by the invasion of their country.
3. **Ms. Zholnovych** (Ukraine), speaking via video link, said that progress had been made on issues of gender equality and in fighting discrimination against women, despite the current difficult situation in Ukraine. The Convention had played a fundamental role in the adoption of policies which ensured equality between men and women and had helped to unify representatives of the Government and civil society. The Convention was also the basis for strategic documents in the areas of human rights, human development and regional development. A State strategy to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women had been approved and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) had been ratified. Laws on advertising had also been amended to combat gender-based discrimination. The legislation had been amended to strengthen efforts to combat domestic and gender-based violence with the use of administrative law.
4. The practical application of the Convention's provisions had been continually improved by judges and law enforcement officials, and the provisions were included in the training of judges, prosecutors and lawyers. Gender-based and human rights approaches were integrated in policies at all levels. A government initiative had ensured open access to gender-disaggregated data from State registers, and temporary special measures had achieved balanced representation in decision-making through the use of gender quotas and mentoring programmes for women. The Government monitored the prevalence of gender stereotypes in the media.
5. A strategy to combat human trafficking for the period 2021–2025 had been approved in 2021, but its implementation had faced challenges due to the war in Ukraine. Since the beginning of 2022, 64 people had been granted the status of survivors of human trafficking and 95 cases involving offences of trafficking in human beings had been registered. However, due to the armed aggression against Ukraine and subsequent forced displacement both internally and externally, it was likely that the numbers of cases and victims were in reality much higher.
6. The proportion of women in senior management was increasing and the number of female ambassadors had more than doubled since 2017. A strategy for integrating gender equality in education had been prepared for submission to the Government, and early education materials published with State funding had passed anti-discrimination testing. A strategy for promoting the rights and opportunities of Roma people had been implemented for the period until 2023. To ensure the continued education of children, the option to study using any mode of participation was provided. Due to widespread damage and destruction suffered by schools during the armed conflict, remote school attendance techniques that had previously been used during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had been employed. As a result, 91 per cent of children in urban areas and 58 per cent of children in rural areas had remained in secondary education. A network of education hubs in both urban and rural areas had been introduced, along with centres for the temporary accommodation of children and for preschool courses.
7. The gender pay gap had decreased in 2021. Continuous improvements had been made to the labour legislation to facilitate the employment of women and ensure that it was possible to combine family and work responsibilities. Hybrid forms of work had been introduced to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and recommendations had been issued to conduct gender audits. Paid paternity leave of up to 14 days had been introduced. In 2022, legislative amendments had been adopted to improve the rights of employees.

8. To ensure open access to comprehensive health care throughout the territory, hospital districts had been created and new mechanisms for funding medical services and providing medicines had been introduced. Such plans for reform had continued despite the war, and the next stage of implementation, which related to infrastructure, was ready. Nearly 160 billion hryvnias (Hrv) would be allocated to a medical guarantee programme, preventive programmes for sex workers had been implemented and the overall HIV infection rate among sex workers had decreased, despite a slight increase among male sex workers. Improvements had been made to medical infrastructure, including the reconstruction of family medicine inpatient facilities and the purchase of ambulances for health-care institutions in rural areas. The reconstruction of regional clinical health-care facilities to ensure modernization, accessibility and energy efficiency had been planned. However, the war had led to the suspension of such plans, and many facilities had been damaged or completely destroyed.

9. Women had accounted for 44 per cent of the people living with disabilities in Ukraine in 2021. A national strategy for an inclusive environment had been approved, inter alia with the aim of ensuring that people with disabilities had public spaces and work services available to them and were actively included in public life. Due to the conflict in Ukraine, the number of people with disabilities was increasing, and so it was essential to speed up measures to improve accessibility in all areas of life.

10. The majority of the internally displaced persons in Ukraine were women, including many older persons and persons with disabilities. Because a large number of women had been forced to leave Ukraine as refugees or had been forcibly deported to the Russian Federation, there had been record numbers of cases of conflict-related sexual violence, including those perpetrated by the Russian military, which indicated that sexual violence had been used as a tool of war. Law enforcement agencies had already begun 43 criminal proceedings relating to conflict-related sexual violence, including some cases involving minors or resulting in death. It was therefore necessary to adapt the anti-violence system in Ukraine so that it met the needs of survivors of such crimes. The network of specialized support services for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence had been broadened to include mobile teams providing social and psychological assistance, shelters and advisory services. Some 50,000 women had already benefited from such support services.

11. Humanitarian aid and psychological support was being provided across Ukraine, including in the temporarily occupied territories. Humanitarian hubs provided accommodation for women who had temporarily left the occupied territories, and a help centre for survivors had been created in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to provide comprehensive social and psychological support for those who had left zones of active hostilities. More than 800 women had already received such services. The national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security had continued, and the number of female military personnel had increased. Recently, 108 female members of the armed services and civilians who had been captured by the Russian forces had been released. They would receive medical care and psychological support.

12. The aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation had limited the opportunities to provide for the basic needs and to protect the basic rights of millions of women and children. A recovery plan had been drafted. It included 24 areas, all of which took into account the gender component. The dialogue with the Committee would provide an impetus to implement actions improving the situation of all women and girls and contributing to the further advancement of their rights in Ukraine.

13. **A representative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights** said that Ukraine had made much progress in accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and empowering women. However, monitoring by the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, the national human rights institution, showed that gender inequality still existed in many areas. Between 2019 and 2021, the Commissioner had received 96 appeals regarding violations of the right to protection from gender-based discrimination and 426 reports of domestic violence.

14. The armed aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine had exacerbated existing problems and created new ones for the realization of the rights of different groups.

Pretrial investigations were being carried out in more than 40 cases of sexual violence perpetrated by members of the Russian military, and cases of conflict-related sexual violence had been reported in the temporarily occupied and liberated territories of Ukraine, mostly affecting women and girls. The Government had made efforts to regulate State policy on the protection of victims and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Articles 1–6

15. **Ms. Leinarte**, acknowledging the efforts the State party had made to hold the constructive dialogue with the Committee, said that she wished to congratulate the Government on the numerous major legislative and policy measures it had taken to combat direct and indirect discrimination against women. The Committee fully understood that the invasion by the Russian Federation had exacerbated the problems posed by existing obstacles to the realization of gender equality and had created new ones, causing internal and external displacement and leaving space for trafficking in persons and conflict-related sexual violence.

16. In Ukraine, investigators from the International Criminal Court, the national authorities and international human rights organizations were gathering evidence of sexual violence against civilians by military personnel and other armed formations. Prosecuting the perpetrators of such offences required thorough investigations which, in turn, necessitated the harmonization of the domestic criminal legislation with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and which also called for cooperation between national, regional and international organizations. She would welcome information on the progress of the investigations under way. She also wished to know who was responsible for coordinating the investigation process. Further comment on criminal proceedings in respect of conflict-related sexual violence would be appreciated. The coverage in the international media suggested that the 43 cases mentioned by the head of delegation had barely scratched the surface of how rape was being used as a weapon of war. The Committee was convinced that Ukraine would come out of the war offering survivors of sexual violence gender-sensitive reparations, medical rehabilitation, psychosocial support and access to justice.

17. **Ms. Ameline** said that she wondered how the State party planned to establish equality, respect for women's rights and women's leadership as strategic priorities for its economic and political reconstruction processes, covering all sectors of economic intervention and every level of decision-making throughout the country. If such priorities were to be established, a binding and institutionalized, comprehensive and cross-sectoral mechanism would have to be put in place. Such a mechanism would need to incorporate parity governance into all levels of decision-making and into programme implementation.

18. **A representative of Ukraine** said that the Office of the Prosecutor General and law enforcement agencies were ensuring investigation of the war crimes perpetrated by the Russian military, including those related to conflict-related sexual violence. The 43 criminal proceedings already under way were only the beginning. In the liberated areas, the Office had identified a pattern of evidence of conflict-related sexual violence in any settlement that the Russian military had previously controlled. There had been cases where commanders had ordered their soldiers to commit acts of sexual violence, which amounted to such violence being used as a weapon of war.

19. The law enforcement agencies were coordinating the documenting, recording and investigation of such offences. Those investigations were obviously important. However, the Office of the Prosecutor General had also worked with the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy to develop a human-focused approach, prioritizing the needs of vulnerable survivors over the prosecution of perpetrators. In particular, survivors must be provided with safe and secure places of residence because they were often reluctant to cooperate with investigators, out of fear of the possibility of the Russian soldiers' return. It often took survivors a long time, sometimes many months, to bring themselves to report offences of conflict-related sexual violence. The Office was working with civil society organizations on an awareness-raising campaign and expected an increase in the number of reported offences.

20. **A representative of Ukraine**, speaking via video link, said that the activities of the law enforcement system focused on documenting the war crimes perpetrated since the start of the full-scale invasion of her country, many of which related to conflict-related sexual

violence against civilians. She wished to make clear that, of the 43 criminal cases already under way, some related to incidents in which there had been several survivors, and others related to multiple cases of civilians being raped. In order to identify instances of sexual violence in the liberated territories, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Office of the Prosecutor General and the National Police of Ukraine had jointly created specialized mobile police units. Those units had gathered a great deal of evidence from civilians who had fled the temporarily occupied territories because of crimes committed by the Russian military.

21. **A representative of Ukraine** said that the main government body for coordinating the fight against conflict-related sexual violence was the Commission for Coordination of Interaction of Executive Authorities to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men. In late June 2022, the Commission had established the Special Intersectoral Working Group on Combating and Preventing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, whose members were drawn from government bodies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, the Government was working with NGOs and international organizations, in particular the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, on implementation of the Framework of Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations on prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence. Implementing the Framework was the responsibility not just of the Government of Ukraine, but also of its international partners: States, citizens and international organizations.

22. **A representative of Ukraine** said that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine had worked with UNFPA to establish a network of centres that provided help for survivors or witnesses of violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, in Zaporizhzhya, Dnipro, Lviv and Kyiv. The centres ensured that survivors received all necessary information and services in one place, including psychological support, information about assistance for internally displaced persons, medical care, humanitarian aid and social benefits. Services were provided in accordance with the key provisions of the Istanbul Convention relating to confidentiality, consent and the prevention of retraumatization. There were plans to expand the network throughout Ukraine and in the countries hosting the largest numbers of Ukrainian refugees, but such an expansion would necessitate help from friendly States because of the sheer scale of the war crimes perpetrated by the Russian occupiers.

23. **A representative of Ukraine**, speaking via video link, said that persons who had suffered sexual offences, torture or ill-treatment during hostilities or armed conflict since May 2022 were entitled to free legal aid, including representation in court and drafting of procedural documents. Citizens of Ukraine living in the temporarily occupied territories were also entitled to such legal aid.

24. **Ms. Levchenko** (Ukraine), speaking as head of the delegation, said that her Government was working with the Dr. Denis Mukwege Foundation and the Global Survivors Fund, along with all relevant national stakeholders, to establish a procedure for the provision of temporary reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. However, it would be impossible to set up a permanent procedure until financial reparations were obtained from the aggressor State, the Russian Federation.

25. Thanks to the advocacy of the Office of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, gender experts had been incorporated into all 24 of the working groups developing the country's economic recovery strategy, and each working group had received a gender briefing. Organizations such as the Ukrainian Women's Fund and EU 4 Gender Equality had been represented at the Ukraine Recovery Conference, held in Lugano, Switzerland in July 2022.

26. **Ms. Haidar** said that the State party had made efforts to strengthen its national machinery for the advancement of women, as recommended in the Committee's previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/UKR/CO/8). Nevertheless, implementation of the numerous policies that had been enacted had been slow. The resources of the national machinery needed to be increased, not reduced, in order to prevent an erosion of women's rights, albeit in a time of war. She wished to know how the State party ensured that the decentralization process, which had been intended to improve State services in all regions,

did not worsen vulnerable and marginalized women's access to basic services. It would be useful to hear how the State party ensured that the recommendations of civil society were taken on board in relation to national plans and strategies, in particular the recovery plan. The Committee had received reports that the persons filling most government positions relating to gender equality were appointed in an advisory capacity, thus undermining their ability to assert their opinions, and that there were no processes to monitor how they were selected or to appraise their performance. The Committee would like to find out what the State party was doing to remedy that situation. She would like to know how the Government intended to address the fact that the territorial community development strategies mentioned in the report did not take sufficient account of gender, in particular in regions that had become inaccessible due to intense fighting or occupation.

27. **Ms. Stott Despoja**, acknowledging the potential difficulty of implementing some measures during the war, said that she wished to highlight the importance of such measures in post-war reconstruction efforts. She wondered whether the State party would consider additional temporary special measures to increase the number of women elected to political positions. She was also curious to find out whether the Government had considered such measures to increase the participation of traditionally marginalized or minority women, including women with disabilities and Roma women. Since the women of Ukraine had been largely absent from negotiations between the country and the Russian Federation, she wished to know whether the State party would consider temporary special measures to increase the number of women involved in negotiation and peacebuilding processes. In addition, it would be useful for the Committee to be told how it could help the State party with the introduction of gender-sensitive reparation programmes and remedies. The Committee advocated the use of temporary special measures to assist with access to justice, particularly for women and girls who had experienced conflict-related sexual violence. She wondered whether any temporary special measures were in place to increase the availability of comprehensive support and rehabilitation services for civilian victims of the conflict, in particular women and girls. Lastly, she would like to know whether the State party was considering temporary special measures to guarantee consular assistance for all women and girls who had been issued Russian passports against their will in the occupied territories.

28. **A representative of Ukraine** said that all strategic plans included a monitoring component, as well as qualitative and quantitative indicators to assess progress. The Government had allocated Hrv 172 million to expand local services for victims of domestic violence; 30 shelters, 38 day centres and 58 advisory services had been established and 40 vehicles had been purchased. Some Hrv 1.5 million had been spent on general measures aimed at combating domestic violence.

29. Decentralization was continuing, despite the difficulties caused by the war, in coordination with all territorial communities. With support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), different ministries had issued recommendations on gender and human rights mainstreaming at the community level. Guidance had also been provided on communication strategies, which were critical to enable access to services irrespective of the beneficiaries' place of residence or residence status. Preparations were under way for Ukraine to sign the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life. Gender mainstreaming at the local level would yield important benefits in terms of policymaking and the delivery of humanitarian services to different groups of women.

30. **A representative of Ukraine** said that some citizens fought for their country on the battlefield, while others were battling in the economic arena, by creating employment and paying taxes. In 2022, employment centres had delivered services to 744,000 unemployed persons, 59 per cent of whom were women; 206,000 persons had found work, 46 per cent of them women; and professional orientation services had been delivered to 644 persons, half of whom were women. A central jobs portal had been created to facilitate access to employment. Social services provided by employment centres also played a critical role.

31. **A representative of Ukraine** said that, while the war had brought destruction and loss of life, it also entailed psychological violence, especially against women. The First Lady of Ukraine had launched the National Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Programme, which was implemented in cooperation with several ministries, government agencies, NGOs,

international organizations and other partners. The Programme, which was coordinated with support from the World Health Organization, UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) office in Ukraine, focused, among other things, on overcoming stigma and other barriers to accessing psychological support. The daily military attacks were a powerful stress factor, and most Ukrainians were in need of counselling. Regular information campaigns were conducted, resilience centres had been established and psychosocial support services were delivered to victims of violence, and also to health workers and law enforcement officers.

32. **A representative of Ukraine** said that NGOs and civil society organizations were actively involved in drafting laws and policymaking on gender equality. A national platform entitled "Equal Rights and Opportunities" had been established upon the initiative of the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality; it provided information on all gender equality-related developments.

33. In the framework of the regional recovery plan drawn up under the auspices of the Ministry of Regional Development, a working committee had been set up to monitor infrastructure recovery and gender inclusion. The Government Commissioner for Gender Policy had signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry to facilitate cooperation in that regard. As part of wider gender mainstreaming efforts, the State Strategy of Regional Development for the period 2021–2027 provided for the implementation of equal rights and opportunities at the regional level. One of the key components of the recently adopted national strategy to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men until 2030 was the development of regional plans for gender mainstreaming across sectors, including the health, safety and security, defence and infrastructure sectors, with a three-month timeline for the elaboration of such plans.

34. Women's rights were in a critical situation, especially in the context of the war. Displaced women, who accounted for 60 per cent of the total number of internally displaced persons, were provided psychological support, health care, legal aid, temporary residence assistance and education service, among other services. Each family member received financial aid in the amount of Hrv 3,000.

35. **A representative of Ukraine** said that undocumented women were given free legal aid in matters related to registration or issuance of identity documents. Free legal aid was also available to women with disabilities and women who were internally displaced. Women accounted for 60 per cent of the applicants for legal aid.

36. A series of awareness measures, both online and offline, had been implemented to inform vulnerable women about their rights and about protection mechanisms. Over the past two years, such information had been delivered to more than 5,000 women with disabilities, more than 3,000 internally displaced women and more than 3,000 female trafficking victims.

37. **A representative of Ukraine** said that the issues arising in regard to Russian passport holders were unprecedented. Pending the establishment of a special procedure to verify the individuals' identity and ascertain the circumstances in which the passports had been obtained, the cases were being dealt with on an individual basis.

38. **Ms. Levchenko** (Ukraine) said that measures would be taken to build the capacity of all actors involved in the provision of comprehensive care and assistance for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. In order to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of such crimes, training had been provided to members of the security and defence sector, among other measures. External support would be needed to enable the award of reparations for conflict-related sexual violence and other war crimes.

39. **Ms. Manalo** asked whether the State party had considered barring Russian prisoners of war convicted of acts of sexual violence from participation in prisoner exchanges, as that might deter the commission of such offences in the future.

40. **Ms. Haida** said that it would be useful to know whether the State party envisaged adopting legislation to strengthen the legal basis for the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality. She would also be interested to find out about plans to expand the mandate of the gender focal points beyond their current advisory function. Both actions would help strengthen the State party's human rights machinery.

41. **Ms. Rana** said that the Committee was gravely concerned about the increase in gender-based violence and discrimination, the persistence of barriers to women's participation in conflict-related decision-making and the high levels of conflict-related sexual violence. It would be useful to learn about the current status of investigations into conflict-related sexual violence and about measures taken to facilitate unimpeded access to timely, survivor-centred services and expeditious relief and reintegration support for all survivors, including women from marginalized groups.

42. The delegation might wish to elaborate on the challenges encountered by the mobile police units and networks of specialized support services for survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence, the scope of their service and any measures taken to strengthen their work. It would also be helpful to find out how the Government coordinated its efforts to provide quality emergency and psychological support services with development partners and civil society organizations. Additional information on the progress made in strengthening survivor-centred approaches would also be appreciated. She would like to know more about the status of draft law No. 2689 of 27 December 2019 on the Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Concerning the Implementation of Norms of International Criminal and Humanitarian Law and would like to find out if it would enter into force in the near future.

43. The Committee would be interested to hear more about the work of the group devoted to the subject of reparations for victims of conflict-related sexual violence, the progress made in carrying out the implementation plan for the prevention of such violence and the timeline for its implementation. The Committee would also like to find out to what extent civil society organizations were involved in the implementation of the Framework of Cooperation on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence concluded between the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Government of Ukraine. She had seen in the State party's report that sociological research studies had been conducted on the impact of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation on women and girls and on manifestations of sexism towards female military personnel. The Committee would be interested to hear the key findings of those studies.

44. The delegation might wish to clarify whether the new version of the second national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security for the period 2021–2025, which had been revised to take account of new conflict-related security threats, had been adopted and was being implemented.

45. The Committee had been informed that although women's representation in the military stood at 15 per cent and was on the rise, women continued to be excluded from decision-making processes. She wondered whether any strategies were in place to support women's roles in the military and to mitigate possible setbacks resulting from the conflict.

46. According to information received by the Committee, persistent stereotypes, stigma and lack of trust in law enforcement continued to prevent women from reporting gender-based violence and constituted a barrier to access to humanitarian aid for marginalized communities, Roma women and older women. She wished to know whether the action plan for the Gender Equality Communication Concept had been finalized and, if so, what steps had been taken for its implementation. She wondered how the State party addressed stereotype-based discrimination of women from marginalized groups.

47. **Ms. Tisheva** said that she welcomed the ratification by the State party of the Istanbul Convention, the establishment of specialized police units to protect women from conflict-related sexual violence, the progressive decentralization to improve coordination and interventions at the local level and the plan to increase support services for victims of domestic violence, with the attendant financial guarantees. She also welcomed the fact that the State party had defined rape as sex without consent, in line with international standards.

48. However, the already high prevalence of domestic violence in the time prior to the invasion had worsened during the war, and a stronger legal framework and enhanced implementation were needed to tackle the problem. Given that 75 per cent of women over the age of 15 were reportedly subjected to violence and 33 per cent to sexual abuse, it would be useful to know how the State party intended to ensure effective access to justice. The delegation might wish to inform the Committee of any plans to increase the number of

shelters, crisis centres and other legal and psychological support services for victims of domestic and gender-based violence, in particular bearing in mind the growing need for safe shelter for other victims of the war. An account of the steps taken to improve vulnerable women's access to such services would also be appreciated. Additional information was needed on measures to improve the collection of data on registered cases of domestic abuse and gender-based violence, protection orders, prosecutions and convictions, disaggregated by sex and type of vulnerability. She was also curious about measures to expand related monitoring activities.

49. In light of the increase in domestic violence and war-related trauma, it would be useful to know whether the State party planned to establish specialized counselling for all victims of the war, with a view to countering a further rise in interpersonal violence. She also wondered whether men in the military's special forces were provided with psychological support.

50. She was curious to know when the State party intended to amend its criminal legislation and Code of Criminal Procedure to abolish the private prosecution of rape and sexual assault crimes and to ensure prompt and thorough public investigations, prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators of rape and compensation and reparation for victims. Public prosecution would support the fight against such crimes during wartime. It would also ensure the sorely needed protection of women in peacetime.

51. **Ms. Gabr** said that in times of war and hostilities, heightened attention was required to prevent trafficking and exploitation. It would be useful to know whether the State party planned to strengthen its legislation prohibiting trafficking for prostitution and whether the national 24-hour hotlines for human trafficking, domestic violence, gender-based violence and violence against children remained operational.

52. It was gratifying that the State party had made available additional funding to combat trafficking, including by facilitating access to identification documents. However, she said that it was regrettable that the Roma population had not been included in those campaigns. The Committee had received reports that an estimated 15 per cent of the Roma population were unregistered and thus unable to access State support. She wondered whether there were any plans to extend civil registration to them.

53. She would be grateful for information on the measures envisaged to combat stereotypes and to remove barriers to the reporting of human trafficking, and also on steps taken to train personnel in the justice system in the identification of trafficking crimes, in particular trafficking for prostitution.

54. She wished to know whether a national coordinator and focal points had been designated for the country's anti-trafficking efforts and what measures were being taken, including with the involvement of NGOs, to protect groups facing an increased risk of trafficking. Among such groups were the 104,000 children reportedly living in State-run orphanages, internally displaced persons and women and girls in conflict-affected areas. The Committee would also like to learn about measures taken to gather data on trafficking and to find out whether local governments were provided with the human and financial resources they required when the responsibility was transferred to them for centres providing assistance to trafficking victims. She would like to find out whether steps were being taken to address reports of men pressuring women with disabilities to marry them so that they could leave Ukraine as the women's personal assistants, how many unaccompanied Ukrainian children there were abroad and what the Government was doing to protect Ukrainian women who were living in Poland from being exploited in prostitution in that country, where prostitution was legal.

55. **A representative of Ukraine** said that the same criminal law procedures applied to all persons who committed sexual offences in Ukraine, without exception. The Government monitored information on sexual offences and war crimes from a variety of sources, including NGOs, and made every attempt to bring the perpetrators to justice. The prosecution of cases of gender-based violence and domestic violence had been a priority of the Office of the Prosecutor General before the invasion, and statistics were kept on such cases. Further efforts were needed to understand the drop in the reporting of such cases since the invasion.

56. **Ms. Levchenko** (Ukraine) said that gender councils had been established in many military divisions. The Annual National Programme prepared in the context of relations between Ukraine and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization included a section on gender equality. It included provisions calling for information campaigns, training and the establishment of a response mechanism for cases of gender discrimination, gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the defence and security forces. Such mechanisms had been set up by decree in the National Guard, the State Emergency Service, the National Police and other bodies. Guidelines had been adopted to address discrimination in the military, which was an important topic, as 5,000 women were serving on the front lines, and there were 38,000 in military positions and 50,000 who worked for the military in various other posts.

57. **A representative of Ukraine** said that in March 2022 the Ministry of Social Policy had conducted an audit of all services provided to survivors of gender-based and domestic violence. More than 400 mobile brigades were providing such services. They were operated either by the Ministry or by NGOs, with funding from international organizations such as UNFPA and UNICEF, and more than 40 types of service were provided to survivors of domestic violence, including by means of shelters, crisis rooms and hotlines. Those services were funded by the State, local communities, NGOs and international organizations and were coordinated both at the national level and through coordinating councils set up by local governments. There were hotlines run by both the Government and NGOs. Four national and 21 regional hotlines provided assistance to survivors of domestic violence, gender discrimination and trafficking in persons. An assessment of the hotlines had been conducted in September 2022.

58. In 2021, over 1,500 Roma families had received assistance through the country's social services network in matters such as obtaining identity documents. The majority of the 104,000 children who were in institutions in Ukraine were in schools offering optional overnight accommodation and had not been separated from their families. About 16,000 of those children were either orphans or had been removed from their parents' custody.

59. **A representative of Ukraine** said that, under a presidential decree issued in 2022, the Ministry of Social Policy had been designated as the national coordinator of efforts to counter trafficking in persons. In that capacity, it developed policy, put forward methodological recommendations, provided training and conducted information campaigns. The Ministry had created an interagency working group composed of department heads to address implementation of the relevant policies. A large number of centres were in place to provide psychological help and various social services to victims of trafficking in persons. In February 2022, some of the rules had been amended to take account of specific situations that those centres faced, such as the return of human trafficking victims to Ukraine without identity documents. To address the increased risk of trafficking generated by the war, the Ministry had, working with other ministries and agencies, NGOs and international partners, increased its information dissemination activities. It provided safety information through newsletters, SMS messages to Ukrainians who had fled abroad, the website safewomen.com.ua, its "Stay Safe" chatbot application and leaflets that it distributed on trains and, with the assistance of the State Border Guard Service, to people crossing the border. All its information materials included the 112 emergency assistance telephone number, which could also be called from the countries of the European Union. The Ministry had also submitted legislative amendments to the national parliament calling on it to increase criminal liability for trafficking in persons.

60. **A representative of Ukraine** said that the national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security had been adopted in October 2020 but was being adapted to take account of new challenges following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. Some 150 civil society organizations had been involved in its adaptation. A draft plan soon to be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers provided for expanded social, administrative, psychological and other services, measures to support people in the temporarily occupied territories and in the areas of active hostilities, expanded services for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and the creation of monitoring mechanisms.

61. A survey on the impact of the war that had started in 2014, involving 1,000 respondents over 16 years of age living in Ukraine, had been launched in 2021, but it had subsequently been stopped because of the full-scale invasion. The survey had shown that persons of both sexes had been largely unaware of how to respond to unattended objects in public spaces, but the level of awareness had been lower among women. Ukrainians had, unfortunately, since become very familiar with the proper procedures, since they now had to apply them in their daily lives. New mechanisms consistent with the requirements of the Istanbul Convention were being developed for the reporting of domestic violence, gender-based violence and sexual violence, and, once developed, training sessions would be held to make them known.

62. **A representative of Ukraine** said that NGOs had already expressed interest in helping to implement the plan for the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence. The Government had, together with UN-Women and other partners, identified a significant number of legislative amendments that would be required for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. The amendment process would take several years. When Ukraine had ratified the Convention, it had filed a reservation stating that it could not ensure implementation of the Convention in the temporarily occupied territories. She urged the Committee to pay attention to the trafficking and exploitation of Ukrainian citizens abroad. Together with UNFPA, the Government had launched the Aurora online psychotherapy platform, which provided confidential assistance to victims of sexual violence.

63. **A representative of Ukraine** said that legislative amendments adopted in 2022 defined discriminatory practices in commercial advertising and prohibited the inclusion of requirements relating to gender and family status in job vacancy postings. The Government was checking the 22,000 current job openings to ensure that they complied with the law.

64. **A representative of Ukraine** said that millions of children who had been internally displaced since the beginning of the war had been evacuated to safe areas of Ukraine or had fled abroad. There were some 12,000 orphaned or unaccompanied Ukrainian children abroad. A coordination headquarters staffed by a number of ministries and international organizations had been set up to protect children's rights. The situation of children in other countries was monitored through the Ukrainian consulates. To reduce the risk of trafficking in children, all adoptions of Ukrainian children, including Ukrainian children abroad, had been halted since the invasion. Together with UNICEF, the Government had established a mechanism in Poland to provide assistance to Ukrainian families who had fled there, and it was planning to set up similar mechanisms in other countries.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.