



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

Distr.: General  
19 July 2016

English only

---

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

**Summary record of the 1415th meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 13 July 2016, at 10 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Hayashi

**Contents**

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

*Seventh periodic report of Turkey*

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They 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 document* to the English Translation Section, room E.6040, Palais des Nations, Geneva (trad\_sec\_eng@unog.ch).

Any corrections to the records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

GE.16-12083 (E) 180716 190716



\* 1 6 1 2 0 8 3 \*

Please recycle



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

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

*Seventh periodic report of Turkey (CCPR/C/TUR/7; CCPR/C/TUR/Q/7 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Turkey took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that, despite the challenges presented by the fight against terrorism and the problems stemming from immigration, Turkey had reformed its approach to human rights and reaffirmed its international commitments.
3. Under the Constitution, all individuals were equal before the law, and temporary special measures were now permitted in order to prevent discrimination against a range of groups, including women. Furthermore, individual appeals could now be submitted to the Constitutional Court, which had taken a number of important decisions in the field of human rights. For example, it had ruled that divorced women should be able to give their surname to their children if they had custody of them and to use their birth name after getting married.
4. Legal and administrative reform had strengthened anti-discrimination measures and extended fundamental rights and freedoms. Hate crimes had been included in the Criminal Code and, along with discrimination, now carried heavier penalties. Institutional appeal mechanisms had also been strengthened. The national human rights institution had recently been restructured and was now called the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey. The Ombudsman Institution had also been established and included a female officer in charge of women and children issues.
5. In the face of attacks by several terrorist groups, the State was working to strike a balance between public safety and public freedoms. All counter-terrorism measures were adopted in line with a legal framework and aimed to minimize damage while ensuring fundamental rights. Moreover, the State provided compensation for damages caused by terrorism and ensured continued access to vital public services.
6. Turkey had taken an active role in following up on the process of the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+20), for example by preparing a country report for the Commission on the Status of Women and hosting a meeting on violence against women. Her Government had also endorsed Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals — to achieve gender equality — as a stand-alone goal.
7. The Tenth Development Plan included several objectives and policies on gender. For example, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies had been restructured with a view to taking a more integrative approach to its policies and services. The General Directorate on the Status of Women now offered comprehensive preventive and protective services for women, and its staff and budget had been increased substantially.
8. There was a zero tolerance approach to violence against women. Turkey had been the first country to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), whose definitions of “violence” and “victim of violence” had been used in Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women. That Law allowed civilian authorities and the police to adopt precautionary measures to prevent domestic violence.
9. Shelters formed an important part of the State party’s strategy to combat violence against women. The number of shelters had more than doubled in recent years, with a

capacity to accommodate almost 3,500 women, and some were run by NGOs and municipalities. Regulations had been drawn up to improve the effectiveness of Law No. 6284 on Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres. Furthermore, electronic systems, such as electronic bracelets and panic buttons, were being piloted in the hope that they would protect victims and allow protective measures to be monitored.

10. The impact of Law No. 6284 had been analysed, leading to measures to improve its implementation. Research had also been undertaken into the effectiveness of policies and programmes on combating violence against women. There were plans to develop an integrated database on women who benefited from the services of shelters and Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres and from measures under Law No. 6284. The Monitoring Committee on Violence against Women had convened its ninth meeting with NGOs and other stakeholders in late 2015.

11. The third action plan on violence against women covered the period 2016-2019 and sought to reform several areas, including health-care services and inter-agency cooperation. Awareness of discrimination against women had been raised through training for public officials who provided services to women victims of violence, including police officers, health-care staff, judges, prosecutors and religious officials.

12. Men were encouraged to combat violence against women. For example, training had been given to armed force personnel. Women victims of violence were supported by a project to combat domestic violence, which included action plans at the provincial level, and there would be cooperation between local NGOs, local authorities and the Government. Training on gender equality was given to the staff of various ministries who provided services to women, and that training was monitored and evaluated.

13. Although women's participation in decision-making was still insufficient, it was increasing in the parliament, local government, diplomacy and academia. Amendments had been made to employment regulations for the benefit of women, including provisions for part-time work for parents and pregnant women, with the aim of protecting the rights of working mothers and balancing the responsibility for childcare between both parents. Other measures included encouraging women to enrol in vocational courses and supporting women entrepreneurs. The Tenth Development Plan had also been instrumental in promoting the employment of women, and the number of working women had increased substantially.

14. At the international level, Women 20 had been established during the country's presidency of the Group of 20 (G-20) to support economic growth in a gender-sensitive manner. The Women 20 summit in Turkey assisted the G-20 in meeting its commitments concerning women's participation in economic and social life.

15. School enrolment and literacy rates among women and girls had increased thanks to national projects, campaigns and conditional cash transfers. Secondary education had become compulsory, leading to a rise in the number of girls enrolled at that level. Efforts were being made to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in educational settings, for example through a position paper disseminated to universities that contained measures to raise awareness about discrimination, mainstream gender equality in universities' activities and make campuses safer.

16. Maternal mortality had decreased, and maintaining its current level would be a priority. Women-friendly birth and reproductive health-care services were provided through a range of programmes, and almost all pregnant women received antenatal care and gave birth in hospitals. Those measures had also contributed to a reduction in infant mortality.

17. Turkey operated an open-door policy for those fleeing war in neighbouring countries and had granted temporary protection status to more than two million Syrians; they were

offered the same opportunities and services as Turkish citizens. A further 270,000 Syrians were being housed at temporary camps, where their basic needs were met and they received psychosocial support. Providers of that support had received training on issues relating to women. Awareness-raising activities had been carried out among Syrian women living in the camps and leaflets on such issues as violence against women and early and civil marriage in Turkish and Arabic had been distributed in the provinces with camps. While Turkey accepted its responsibility to assist displaced persons, the international community should also fulfil its duty.

*Articles 1 to 6*

18. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that, while she commended the State party's promotion of the Istanbul Convention, recent developments had cast doubts on its commitment to its international obligations, for example its questioning of the principle of gender equality, promotion of stereotypical roles for women and imprisonment of opponents of the Government. She asked why discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity was not prohibited, whether steps had been taken to bring the Human Rights and Equality Institution into line with the Paris Principles and whether the scope of the definition of discrimination contained in the bill establishing the Institution would be broadened.

19. Given that the Convention had become part of domestic law upon ratification, she asked why it had not been applied by the courts. She wished to know how many appeals had been lodged with the Constitutional Court by women since September 2012, whether access to justice was being addressed by any projects other than that being undertaken by the Union of Turkish Bar Associations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), how many women would benefit from that project and whether it would provide legal assistance for women in all areas, including family law. Lastly, she would appreciate information on the discriminatory legislation still being applied in Turkey, including the provisions of the Criminal Code that permitted virginity tests without the consent of the woman if authorized by a judge or prosecutor and the Population Planning Law, under which a woman required her husband's consent to terminate a pregnancy.

20. **Ms. Ameline**, noting the State party's significant undertakings in relation to refugees, asked whether more camps would be built and resources increased in order to eradicate the negative practices occurring in them. She wished to know what measures had been adopted to accelerate the granting of temporary protection status for refugees and what financial and human resources were allocated to the needs of women refugees.

21. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that article 90 of the Constitution provided that international laws prevailed over domestic laws in cases of conflict. Turkey had adopted a number of laws to form a legal framework for addressing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. The Istanbul Convention guaranteed protection against numerous forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Moreover, article 10 of the Constitution provided that all persons were equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief or religion. Discrimination was not practised in employment. The Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women (Law No. 6284), which contained a comprehensive list of prohibited grounds for discrimination, guaranteed protection to victims of gender-based violence. A number of consultation meetings had been held with NGOs. The reports of those meetings could be accessed online.

22. **Mr. Çetin** (Turkey) said that, under the law regulating the termination of pregnancy, it was possible to terminate a pregnancy up to the tenth week. The law in question had been in force since 1983 and there were no current plans to amend it.

23. **Mr. Ulutaş** (Turkey) said that a number of decisions taken by the Supreme Court and the Council of State served to confirm the primacy of international law over domestic law. The delegation could send a copy of those decisions to the Committee if required.

24. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that Syrian women benefiting from temporary protection could access services on an equal footing with Turkish women, including services for victims of gender-based violence, without discrimination. The Government worked closely with the national authority for disaster management and had opened a number of temporary shelters where Syrian refugees could receive essential care. A wealth of information on topics such as health care, first aid, education, marriage and family life, domestic violence and human trafficking had been made available in Arabic for the benefit of those living in shelters and camps and had been disseminated widely in the provinces with the greatest population of Syrian refugees. Syrian university graduates were trained to provide information on those topics to other Syrian citizens. To date, psychosocial support had been provided to more than 100,000 Syrian refugees. A number of humanitarian programmes had been rolled out in an effort to support camp staff. Some 120 trainers educated refugees living in the camps and elsewhere on gender issues. Syrian refugees could benefit from development programmes in camps and shelters and elsewhere. Children's education programmes had been set up in some 20 provinces and, to date, had benefited thousands of children. Efforts had been made to raise the awareness of Syrian refugees of their rights and a special hotline providing psychosocial support in Arabic had also been set up. Unaccompanied minors benefited from support services and special initiatives organized at the provincial level.

25. **Mr. Akbaba** (Turkey) said that there were no barriers to the enrolment of Syrian refugee children in Turkish schools. Some 290,000 Syrian refugee children had been educated in Turkish schools in the 2015/16 school year.

26. **Ms. Tosun** (Turkey) said that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security had laid down regulations governing the access of Syrian refugees benefiting from temporary protection to the Turkish labour market. The Ministry had also prepared and published information brochures in Arabic on Turkish labour legislation and the formalities of working in Turkey, including on how to apply for a work permit, which were available on its website.

27. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that the Government worked closely with NGOs, civil society organizations and universities in organizing activities aimed at empowering Turkish women. NGOs in particular provided valuable input into the drafting of new legislation, the design of policies and programmes and the carrying out of promotional activities. NGOs had been invited to participate in activities to promote women's rights and to prevent gender-based violence within the framework of International Women's Day. The Government often sought the opinion of centres for women's studies attached to universities when designing programmes for women and had involved NGOs in preparing the National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence against Women.

28. **Mr. Demir** (Turkey) said that, from the outset of the Syrian crisis, Turkey had opened its borders to all those fleeing the conflict and had pursued a policy of non-refoulement. International refugee law provided for a special category of refugee, namely refugees with special needs, which included older persons, unaccompanied minors, pregnant women, single parents and persons suffering from certain types of illness. Turkish law also recognized refugees with special needs, granting them special rights and priority access to health-care and other services. If required, refugees with special needs could be provided with an interpreter to assist them during interviews. The State was also required to guarantee those refugees access to justice, including access to a lawyer.

29. **Mr. Ulutaş** (Turkey) said that articles 75 to 77 of the Code of Criminal Procedure regulated the physical examination of suspects and accused persons and the taking of biological samples from those persons and from third parties. In order to obtain evidence of a crime, the public prosecutor could, in urgent cases, issue an order to conduct an internal examination of the body of a suspect or accused person or to take a sample from his or her body such as blood, hair or saliva. In order for evidence to be collected, the presiding judge was required to approve the order issued by the prosecutor within 24 hours. Orders not approved by the presiding judge were considered invalid. Suspects and accused persons were entitled to contest the order. The aforementioned internal examination could include the examination of genitalia or the anus. A new law on the procedures for conducting physical and genetic examinations and ascertaining an individual's identity had entered into force on 1 June 2015.

30. Training on gender equality and the prevention of gender-based and domestic violence was provided to lawyers, prosecutors and judicial officers through seminars, a variety of ministerial initiatives and the courses run by the Turkish Justice Academy. Some 320 family court judges and prosecutors had received training on the prevention of violence against women. The Ministry of Family and Social Policies had organized seminars on gender equality and the services available to female victims of violence. Internal training programmes for judges and prosecutors included a component on gender issues. To enhance the enforcement of Law No. 6284, judges, prosecutors and police officers were provided with pre-service and in-service training on gender equality and gender-based violence. The judgments handed down against Turkey by the European Court of Human Rights were compiled and circulated to all courts. Specialized units had been set up in the country's major cities with the aim of improving the rate of investigation of domestic violence cases. Newly constructed courthouses included separate rooms for interviewing children and victims of crime.

31. **Mr. Dumanli** (Turkey) said that Law No. 6701 on the Human Rights and Equality Institution defined, inter alia, direct, indirect and multiple discrimination and harassment. The Law accorded the Institute administrative and financial autonomy and laid down a series of requirements to ensure the impartiality of the members of its governing body. The Law also protected the members of the governing body against arbitrary investigation in the performance of their duties. In order to maintain a high level of expertise within the Institution, members of the governing body whose term had expired could be re-elected.

32. **Ms. Haidar** said that the Committee was concerned that the replacement of the Ministry for Women and Family Affairs, which had reported directly to the Prime Minister, by the General Directorate on the Status of Women of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies as the national machinery for the advancement of women had restricted the machinery's scope of action, weakened its authority and undermined its effectiveness. Moreover, the General Directorate's activities appeared to be centred around the role played by women in the family and not on their role as individuals in Turkish society. She asked why the training programmes for public officials offered by the General Directorate no longer included a module on gender equality and whether the State party could consider elevating the status of the General Directorate by strengthening its mandate, increasing its authority and allocating the human and financial resources necessary to achieve that end. She would also like to know more about the relationship between the General Directorate and the Ombudsman Institution and about the relationship between the General Directorate and the new Human Rights and Equality Institution, which was not yet in full compliance with the Paris Principles.

33. It appeared that, more often than not, Turkish NGOs were relegated to a consultative role and were seldom given the opportunity to influence public policy. The fact that NGOs

had not been invited to participate in the preparations for the State party's review in the context of the high-level political forum on sustainable development attested to that reality.

34. She asked why the revised national action plan on gender equality had still not been adopted and whether the State party intended to devise a national action plan to give effect to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, especially in view of the forced displacement of the population in south-east Turkey and the impact of the massive influx of refugees on the security situation in the country. She also wished to know what measures had been taken by the State party to act upon the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations and general recommendation No. 32 on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women.

35. **Ms. Nadaraia** said that, although the constitutional amendments enacted in 2010 provided for the possibility of adopting temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between women and men, they were not expressly recognized in the Constitution itself, which limited their application in practice. Thus far, it appeared that such measures had only been applied in respect of education and employment. Regrettably, the programmes listed in the State party's report did not constitute temporary special measures. She would be grateful if the delegation would provide additional information on the temporary special measures in place in areas where women were underrepresented or disadvantaged. The general lack of measures to promote women's participation in politics and in decision-making processes and the fact that the laws governing political parties and parliamentary elections made no reference to temporary special measures to ensure equal representation of women and men were also a cause for concern. She asked whether the State party planned to introduce compulsory temporary special measures to remedy that situation and what steps it had taken to give effect to the recommendation contained in the Committee's previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/TUR/CO/6) calling upon it to familiarize all relevant officials with the concept of temporary special measures described in article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and interpreted in the Committee's general recommendation No. 25. She also wished to know whether the State party planned to extend temporary special measures to disadvantaged groups of women, including women with disabilities, older women, minority women, refugee women and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender women.

36. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that NGOs played an important role in the legislative process and were active participants in the design and promotion of programmes and policies. A consultation meeting had been held with some 40 NGOs in the context of International Women's Day to determine the best way for them to contribute to the Government's work. A consultation meeting had also been held with the directors of centres for women's studies attached to universities. It had been decided to hold such meetings on a regular basis. As part of its efforts to combat domestic violence, the Government had funded a number of initiatives aimed at building the capacity of NGOs to deal with such violence. NGOs had been invited to attend a meeting with UN-Women on preventing gender-based violence and meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women.

37. **Mr. Dumanli** (Turkey) said that the recent spate of terrorist activity in the country and pressing security concerns had necessitated the temporary removal of persons living in certain areas from their homes to allow anti-terrorism operations to be conducted. Those persons had not been internally displaced and would be returned to their homes as soon as possible. In the meantime, the Government provided them with compensation, guaranteed them access to essential services and would ensure their safe return to their homes. Local authorities had been granted broad powers to better manage the situation.

38. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that, during the implementation period of the previous national action plan on gender equality, the Government had met with NGOs on two

occasions to discuss the areas of concern addressed in the Plan. The revised national action plan was still being prepared and would be adopted once the restructuring of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies was complete. New training modules on gender equality were currently being prepared. The Government was working closely with other public bodies to raise awareness of gender equality issues.

39. **Mr. Çarıkçı** (Turkey) said that Turkey actively promoted the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in international forums such as the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In keeping with the spirit of the resolution, Turkey supported the empowerment of women and girls in various emergency, conflict and post-conflict situations through its comprehensive development assistance programmes. The projects carried out by Turkey in Somalia and Afghanistan in the fields of education and health services were concrete examples of its efforts to achieve that end. Deliberations were under way with a view to drafting a national action plan to implement the resolution.

40. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that special temporary measures had been adopted in the form of conditional cash transfers, which were distributed to widows to support their livelihoods and to families to enable girls to attend school. To date, around 1.1 million girls had benefited from the cash transfers. Some payments were provided on a permanent basis if necessary. Conditional health transfers were also provided to pregnant women.

41. **Mr. Bilge** (Turkey) said that protection measures had been established for women and families who had been subjected to violence and included temporary shelters, counselling, psychosocial support and rental subsidies. To ensure that child victims continued their education if they had to move localities, simplified school enrolment procedures had been set up, and financial support, school supplies and food were also provided.

42. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that the Convention had been translated and posted online. The Committee's recommendations and views were taken into account in decisions and the development of activities of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies and the General Directorate on the Status of Women.

43. **Ms. Ameline** asked, with respect to international cooperation on the situation of refugees in the country, whether the Government had launched an investigation into the possible war crimes committed that had affected the refugees, and refugee women in particular. She asked whether the particular situation of women would be taken into account in discussions on the bill to grant Turkish nationality to certain refugees. Detailed statistics and indicators would also be appreciated showing the impact of the measures taken for women by the General Directorate of Migration Management.

44. **Ms. Haidar** said that the participation of civil society in decision-making processes implied active engagement rather than mere information sharing and should include all types of organizations. She wondered when the new national action plan on gender equality would be adopted and when the Government envisaged adopting a plan to support the participation of women in conflict prevention, taking into account the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations.

45. **Ms. Nadaraia** asked what was being done to promote temporary special measures and whether training was provided to officials on the purposes and application of those measures.

46. **Ms. Schulz** asked how Kurdish women wishing to make enquiries or file complaints about discrimination were guaranteed access to justice, including the court system, police services and public authorities, and how that situation might be improved.



47. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** asked what concrete measures were taken to protect refugees and migrants from sexual exploitation and forced prostitution. She asked whether the Government would consider repealing article 287 of the Criminal Code, which allowed virginity tests and genital examinations to be performed without the woman's consent under certain circumstances. What was being done to encourage bar associations to develop legal aid programmes and what sections of the population would be targeted by those?

48. **Mr. Çarıkçı** (Turkey) said that attacks committed by terrorist organizations against women and girls required a comprehensive and inclusive approach to eliminate the root causes of the problem and end gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict. The Turkish authorities made significant efforts to provide protection for displaced Syrian women and girls in the country. Between 2013 and 2015, the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, had carried out a humanitarian aid programme, and similar initiatives would be adopted in the near future.

49. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that the development and implementation of the new national action plan on gender equality had been delayed owing to ministerial changes in the Government. However, discussions on the new plan were under way with civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

50. **Mr. Ulutaş** (Turkey) said that legal aid was provided to anyone, including Kurdish women, who could not afford a lawyer. Legislation had been amended to allow defendants to use a language of their choice, such as Kurdish, during proceedings. The Ombudsman, the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights and Equality Institution were all competent to receive complaints concerning discrimination. Under the Criminal Code, anyone who authorized or performed a genital examination without the permission of a judge or prosecutor was liable to a prison term of between 3 months and 1 year.

51. **Mr. Çarıkçı** (Turkey) said, with regard to international cooperation, that the State party received regular visits from the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which interviewed Syrian refugees in the country, and that the corresponding reports paid tribute to the country's humanitarian efforts and hosting of refugees.

52. **Mr. Demir** (Turkey) said that the State party maintained an open-door policy for refugees fleeing zones of conflict, particularly the Syrian Arab Republic. International contributions to the State party for the accommodation and rehabilitation of Syrian refugees amounted to US\$ 467 million and the State party itself had contributed US\$ 11 billion to that end. Syrian refugees were offered temporary employment permits to enable them to enter the labour market and persons who had been granted international or temporary protection status were covered by the public health-care system.

53. **Mr. Çetin** (Turkey) said that virginity tests were prohibited by law except upon the request of a judge for a legal case.

54. **Mr. Dumanli** (Turkey) said that discussion of the possibility of granting Turkish citizenship to Syrians was continuing, which reflected the country's overall humanitarian approach. A committee composed of various government ministries and law enforcement agencies had been set up to investigate reports of refugee women being forced into prostitution.

55. **Mr. Çarıkçı** (Turkey) said that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had commended national immigration legislation. Migration issues were handled by the Directorate General of Migration Management, which was a civilian authority and not a law enforcement agency. The country had a long and positive history of migration and the insignia of the Directorate showed the red crescent and a swallow, a migrating bird symbolizing universality and fortune, which represented the country's

attitude towards migrants. The Law on Foreigners and International Protection had been translated into 10 languages.

56. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that citizenship was granted on the basis of skills and labour market needs, as in many countries. With the support of civil society and other institutions, Turkish citizens and newly arrived migrants undertook various activities to ensure they lived together harmoniously.

57. **Mr. Çarıkçı** (Turkey) said that the overriding priority was to provide Syrian migrants with quality education and health care so that, when the time came, they would be in a position to return to the Syrian Arab Republic to rebuild their country. Qualified Arabic-speaking Syrian professionals were therefore employed to deliver those services.

58. **Ms. Al-Dosari** said she would like to know how the premarital training programme referred to in the report of the State party (CEDAW/C/TUR/7, para. 85) addressed gender stereotypes. She invited the delegation to provide information on legislation to protect women against all forms of violence, which should include sexual harassment, excessive parental authority, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation and honour killings. She would appreciate information on legislation regarding sexual abuse and rape and on the protection and assistance provided to the victims of those crimes. Would an impact assessment be conducted of protection measures for women victims of violence and abuse?

59. **Ms. Ameline** asked how the State party responded to reports from civil society, the media and women's rights activists that a resurgence of conservative stereotypes in the country, such as casting women almost exclusively as mothers, coming down against the principle of abortion or calling into question family planning, undermined progress made in women's equality in the public and professional domains by limiting women to the private sphere. She also wondered how the State party responded to reports that the judiciary was ill-equipped to deal with cases of gender inequality, which resulted in impunity. She asked whether the principle of secularism still lay at the heart of society. Lastly, were campaigns launched in the country to raise awareness of the Convention and combat patriarchal and negative practices, such as forced marriage, honour killing, polygamy and gender inequality in the family?

60. **Ms. Gabr** asked whether there were any plans to evaluate the implementation of the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons, and what role was currently played by the National Task Force on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The Committee had received information that the three NGO-run shelters for victims of trafficking were in financial difficulties and that one was to be closed: could the delegation comment on that situation? The new regulations providing work permits for Syrian refugees appeared to have created a situation of forced labour, and she wondered how did the Government intend to address that problem. She asked what role was played by the security forces and the police in combating gangs involved in human trafficking, how cases of early or forced marriage were monitored, whether there had been any prosecutions or sentences handed down in such cases, how the issue of polygamy was being addressed and what function did the Victims Department of the Ministry of Justice serve.

61. **Ms. Leinarte** asked whether help in finding employment had been provided to the women working in brothels that were reported by the media to have been closed down. She would appreciate comment on reports that, after police raids on brothels, the women working there had been detained. She also wished to know what practical measures were in place to tackle the potential sexual exploitation of women in areas affected by the migration crisis and the internal displacement of the Kurdish population.

62. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that in the domestic violence shelters run by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, women received psychosocial support and had access to legal aid. There were currently 137 shelters around the country, with a total

capacity for 3,344 persons, and, between 1991 and 2016, they had benefited 74,000 women and 37,000 children. There were also violence monitoring centres in 47 provinces, providing temporary aid and, where necessary, monitoring of protection orders. Between 2010 and 2016, the shelters had supported 86,000 women, 5,200 men and 90,000 children, and the Government intended to establish such shelters in all 81 provinces by late 2017.

63. Activities aimed at tackling stereotypes had been undertaken within the framework of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. A campaign to emphasize men's participation in that initiative had received support from the President of Turkey and male Members of Parliament, and anti-violence messages had been disseminated through advertisements in national newspapers and SMSs. In 2015, as part of an anti-violence campaign, short videos were shown on television before sports matches, and landmarks had been lit up in orange in support of the "Orange the World" initiative.

64. More than 200 high-level public officials had attended training sessions on the Convention and the Istanbul Convention. The Ministry of the Interior had provided training on gender equality and the prevention of violence against women to 65,000 health-care workers, 48,000 religious officials and 326 family court judges and had also run train-the-trainer programmes for the police and the judiciary.

65. The number of girls entering into early marriages was slowly decreasing — figures showed a drop from 34,569 in 2014 to 31,000 in 2015. In 2012, revisions to the Civil Code had increased the minimum age for marriage for girls to 17, in line with that for boys. The provision for compensation for sexual assault by marriage to the perpetrator had been abolished. The Criminal Code now recognized sexual activity with a minor and the sexual exploitation of children as stand-alone offences, and the punishments for those crimes had been increased. Education was now compulsory for 12 years, which helped in the fight against early marriages. The Child Services General Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior had two strategies to address the issue of early marriage: the National Child Rights Action Plan and the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Women for the period 2016-2019. The Social Assistance General Directorate provided conditional cash transfers to help keep girls in school.

66. Since 1993, the Ministry of Education had run training sessions for parents of children under the age of 5 since 1993, covering a wide range of topics including gender equality, basic human rights, children's rights, domestic violence and conflict resolution. The sessions had reached over two million families.

67. **Mr. Demir** (Turkey) said that the General Directorate of Migration Management had established a department to support the victims of human trafficking. Provincial experts identified persons considered to be at risk of trafficking, and such persons were then entitled to access the services of the department for a 30-day period, including the possibility of applying for a temporary residence permit. Under new regulations, persons at risk of being trafficked could not be deported.

68. The National Task Force on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings had been renamed and met in February of each year. In 2015, 1,240 people had been identified as victims of human trafficking, while in 2016, to date, 102 victims had so far been identified. The victim support programme currently in place provided accommodation in a shelter or safe haven, and access to a range of support, including legal aid, training and vocational education and temporary financial assistance. The safe return programme was entirely voluntary, and victims could be returned to their country of origin or travel to a safe third country at their own request. However, victims also had the option to request a temporary residence permit, initially for a period of 30 days, which could be extended in 6-month increments up to a maximum of 3 years. The shelters which were currently received international funding from the European Union Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

would be funded from the national budget when that programme ended. The Government had also introduced a helpline, the so-called 157 helpline, for victims of human trafficking, which provided services in a number of languages.

69. **Ms. Tosun** (Turkey), replying to a question raised about low wages being paid to Syrian refugees, said that refugees who enjoyed temporary protection had been allowed to seek employment since 2011. New legislation on work permits had been introduced in 2016 aimed at ensuring that Syrian refugees received at least the minimum wage. Labour inspectorates were also working to prevent unregistered employment, and businesses that employed unregistered workers risked heavy fines.

70. **Mr. Dumanli** (Turkey) said that, since 2016, the Ministry of the Interior had had separate departments for combating smuggling and trafficking in persons, with branches in the field. The police and coast guard had similar departments. In 2015, some 1,800 traffickers had been apprehended. His Government, therefore, was not only providing services and protection to victims but was also actively involved in the suppression and prevention of human trafficking.

71. **Mr. Ulutaş** (Turkey) said that victims were defined under the law as persons whose rights had been violated and had suffered discrimination or harm, including physical or mental injury or economic loss. The Government conducted campaigns to raise awareness about human trafficking and was working with civil society organizations, the media and international organizations in order to provide compensation for the harm caused. It looked into the best practices of other countries on identifying victims and providing them with appropriate services, support and guidance.

72. **Mr. Dumanli** (Turkey) said that victims, minorities and vulnerable groups had been given priority attention in the justice system. They had access to various types of information, counselling and guidance.

73. **Ms. Ustaoglu** (Turkey) said that prostitution was regulated in Turkey and restricted to certain places. Persons involved in prostitution were required to undergo regular medical examinations and to receive certification. Brothels must maintain a safe and healthy environment for sex workers. The police did not interfere with persons involved in prostitution so long as they had not been forced into sex work. However, if there was evidence of coercion, there were judicial procedures in place to bring the perpetrators of the crime to justice.

74. Lastly, the budget for the prevention of violence of the General Directorate on the Status of Women had increased by some 20 per cent between 2015 and 2016. Day-care centres and shelters and temporary cash assistance had been provided under Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women. Centres for the prevention of violence had received some US\$ 20 million and women's shelters some US\$ 25 million. In total, in 2016, US\$ 48 million had been allocated for the prevention of violence against women.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*