



**Convention on the Elimination
of all Forms of Discrimination
Against Women**

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 112th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 22 February 1988, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. BERNARD

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT VIENNA

1. Miss ANSTEE (Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna) said that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was an important international legal instrument because it sought to achieve the purposes of the United Nations Charter. One of those purposes - social progress - could not be attained without the advancement of women to full equality, yet women's equality could not be ensured without social progress. In that respect, the Convention was as much a pronouncement of global social policy as it was a legal instrument, a fact which accounted for its strength. As the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, CEDAW was thus a principal instrument of social policy.

2. The relationship between law and policy was reflected in the Committee's work, which could be compared to the monitoring of nuclear reactor safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency: in many respects, the Committee provided international monitoring of the safeguards applicable to the status of women. However, while the Committee could identify inadequacies in the implementation of the Convention by States parties, its task of highlighting instances of effective implementation was even more important because it helped to set policy and to show States how best to conform to the standards set by the Convention.

3. As the Committee's secretariat, the Branch for the Advancement of Women had a responsibility to expedite the work of the Committee and to ensure that its conclusions were incorporated into the broader work of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. The Branch itself could benefit from the work of CEDAW by using the material presented in States parties' reports in the formulation of policies and in the general area of monitoring, review and appraisal. The Committee's general recommendations also provided the Branch with a basis for establishing priorities for research and analysis in various areas, including those not traditionally associated with the advancement of women. In order for that to occur, however, the Committee must be apprised of the full range of experience in States parties. The increasing number of overdue reports was thus discouraging, since it prevented the Committee from obtaining that knowledge. She urged States parties whose reports were overdue to submit them to the Committee for the benefit of all.

4. Discussing the benefits of the Convention with experts from States that had already ratified it amounted to a dialogue of the convinced. She hoped, however, that the Committee's work would demonstrate the positive benefits of ratifying the Convention to States that had not yet done so. It might not be unduly optimistic to envisage the universal ratification of the Convention by the year 2000, which would constitute a real tribute to the power of international law.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE
CONVENTION (continued)

Initial report of Argentina (CEDAW/C/5/Add.39 and Amend.1)

5. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms. Alfonsín de Fasán (Argentina) took a place at the Committee table.

6. Ms. ALFONSIN de FASAN (Argentina) said that, with the return of democracy, the constitutional Government of Argentina had pledged publically to promote human rights in Argentine society, and to that end had devised a global policy emphasizing the need for women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. The promotion of human rights had required "decontaminating" an environment in which an authoritarian mentality had taken hold and adopting legislative measures that would guarantee the effective enjoyment of such rights. Accordingly, the Government had developed a human-rights education policy and, in 1985, had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

7. While the advent of democracy had opened up new avenues for women, much remained to be done to integrate them fully in all aspects of national life. Consequently, many institutional reforms had been introduced at the national and provincial levels. One important step had been the establishment in 1987 of the Subsecretariat for Women within the Ministry of Health and Social Action; that Ministry had also launched a programme entitled "Women, Health and Development". A General Directorate for Women had also been established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship. Its tasks included monitoring the country's implementation of the Convention and, to that end, it maintained close links with the parliamentary commissions and government bodies active in the specific areas covered by that instrument. Lastly, some 10 provincial bodies had been established to date to deal with issues relating to women.

8. While legal equality of men and women was enshrined in the National Constitution, a number of legislative measures had also been enacted to eliminate discrimination. Parental authority had been extended to mothers as well as fathers and children born out of wedlock were protected against discriminatory treatment under the law. Women had been granted several new rights as a result of recent changes in the laws governing marriage and divorce. It should be pointed out that although the Penal Code contained discriminatory provisions regarding women who committed adultery, they had not been invoked for some time.

9. Such reforms were indicative of the Government's readiness to ensure women's equality under the law. Nevertheless, discrimination would not be entirely eradicated from Argentina as long as prejudices and discriminatory practices persisted. The Government had therefore undertaken an information campaign to educate public opinion: a Committee for the Image of Women and the Family had been established which had prepared a series of television spots dealing with discrimination against women in Argentine society. A regular television programme on that subject was also currently being broadcast. In addition, financial resources had been transferred to the provinces for assisting women and their families in various ways, including the establishment of child-care centres.

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(Ms. Alfonsín de Fasán, Argentina)

10. Argentina's educational system required a number of modifications if existing inequities were to be eliminated. Some measures had already been undertaken. The City of Buenos Aires had chosen to use textbooks that did not portray stereotyped sex roles. A programme of correspondence courses had been instituted to reduce the educational dropout rate for girls and women. The National Directorate for Pre-Primary and Primary Education had decided to make all the institutions under its authority coeducational.

11. Women's role in the economic life of any country was a crucial one. In Argentina, the Labour Contract Law contained a provision for equal pay for equal work. Certain allegedly protective laws which actually prevented women from undertaking certain types of work had been revised and ways of securing greater social benefits for women engaged in domestic service had been identified. She drew attention to the information in the report on legislation concerning maternity benefits and "excedencia", or absence with retention of acquired rights.

12. Although women had joined the labour force in growing numbers, they were less well represented in senior positions than men. Generally speaking, women had encountered difficulties in obtaining employment for three reasons: the current difficult economic situation facing developing countries in general; the introduction of new technology, particularly in the service sector; and the persistence of social prejudices in the work environment. The National Institute for Statistics and Censuses had recently drawn attention to the need to reflect the number of economically active Argentine women accurately by taking into consideration the work done by women on their own land or in the home. Lastly, although women did not encounter any legal discrimination which prevented them from joining trade unions, family responsibilities and cultural barriers none the less made such membership difficult.

13. Medical care was available equally to men and women in Argentina. While private medical care was generally costly, State hospitals provided medical services free of charge to those who could prove their inability to pay. Likewise, many maternal and child health care centres dispensed their services free of charge. Recent legislation ensured that all women had access to free pap smears and family planning counselling. In the area of nutrition, a National Food Programme (PAN), described in detail in the report, had been developed. Argentina had a comprehensive social security system covering all employed persons; in addition, a non-contributory pension scheme existed for persons of both sexes who were not entitled to a retirement pension.

14. The labour situation of rural women in Argentina was basically dependent on the type of farming done and the employment available in any given area. In peasant families, women performed roughly half of all farm work. On larger family farms, women frequently played a supervisory role. Various programmes had been set up to assist farmers and their families and to promote women's rights, including the Community Activities Plan designed to organize and provide advisory services to rural women's groups established to improve their community's living conditions. However, much remained to be done to improve rural women's status. In particular, more female students must be enrolled in agricultural schools.

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(Ms. Alfonsín de Fasán)

15. Argentine women had played an important role in the political life of their country. Since 1947, they had been able to vote and hold elected office. In recent elections and referendums, they had shown a marked tendency to support proposals favouring peace and justice. Although the democracy to which the country aspired required the active political participation of women, however, political parties continued to present overwhelmingly male slates, an unfortunate reality which would have to be changed.

16. It was distressing to note that in a world where \$1.8 million was spent each minute on weapons, the socio-economic gap between developed and developing countries was widening. Yet despite the country's economic difficulties, Argentine women were convinced that, under democracy, they would continue to make progress.

17. Ms. CORTI welcomed Argentina's achievements in the struggle to eliminate discrimination against women since the return of democracy, including the establishment of governmental women's bodies and programmes, the decline in illiteracy rates, and changes in traditional cultural attitudes towards women. The Government was clearly endeavouring to guarantee an equal role for women.

18. Ms. MONTENEGRO DE FLETCHER said that Argentina's report showed that equality could be attained, provided that prevailing social attitudes so permitted. The Church in Latin American countries had also helped to promote women's equality. It would be useful to know what Argentine churches were doing to bring about changes in traditional attitudes towards women.

19. She wished to know which body was responsible for co-ordinating the numerous Argentine women's programmes. More information was also needed regarding marriage in Argentina. She wished to know whether women were given guidance so as to prevent male domination in conjugal relationships.

20. Ms. PILATAXI DE ARENAS, referring to the integration of women in and the withdrawal of men from the labour force, said that more information was needed regarding the situation of women in the labour force, including wage data. The phrase "unremunerated household activities" (CEDAW/C/5/Add.39/Amend.1, p. 63) should be clarified. It would also be useful to know what measures the Subsecretariat for Women had taken with a view to achieving its objectives.

21. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA said that Argentine women had struggled to liberate themselves from the restrictions of the previous régime. With the disappearance of hundreds of individuals, the country had been deprived of a generation of young people, a situation which had resulted in economic decline. The current Government was to be commended for its determination to remedy former abuses and to improve the economic, social and political situation.

22. Argentina should provide information on the percentages of men and women in the labour force according to occupation, particularly the percentage of women employed in the productive sector. Unemployment figures for both men and women should also be made available. Moreover, it should be noted that the integration

(Ms. Veliz de Villalvilla)

of women in the labour force was a result of the economic crisis and thus did not constitute a qualitative change.

23. It would be interesting to have further information on the National Food Programme and on the civic organizations which took part in it.

24. Ms. ESCOBAR, supported by Ms. OESER, said that it would be useful to know whether Argentina had adopted the dualist doctrine, which required that internal statutes typify the provisions of international conventions in order for them to enter into force. She also wished to know whether the Convention had ever been invoked before the Supreme Court.

25. The terms "honest" and "virtuous", appearing on pages 22 and 24 of the report, respectively, should be clarified. As to adultery, additional information was needed concerning the role of women's groups and non-governmental organizations which were working to change the legislation in force. It would be useful to know whether there were any legal provisions concerning the rape of girls under 12 years of age, and whether the Penal Code imposed sanctions on a husband who assaulted his wife sexually.

26. Ms. GUAN Minqian said that de facto discrimination against women was understandable in a country facing serious economic difficulties and undergoing a process of democratization. Nevertheless, in less than three years, Argentina had ratified several human rights conventions and had adopted legislation which was particularly relevant to women and children.

27. Further information should be provided concerning the migration of Argentine women from rural to urban areas and the government assistance being provided in housing, employment and children's educational facilities. It would be interesting to learn what steps the Government was taking to assist single mothers, especially young girls.

28. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU said that she understood the concern expressed in the report about the establishment of democracy in Argentina. Equality was a political issue; its attainment required social progress. The report's frank, feminist approach boded well for the implementation of the Convention.

29. She expressed the hope that Argentine women would take part in decision-making, since they had the requisite political maturity. Although they had played a significant role in the struggle against the dictatorship, their current role was marginal. She welcomed the reference to the relationship between marginalization and psychological problems, a fact which had not been sufficiently emphasized by the world feminist movement.

30. Further information was needed on the status of the Subsecretariat for Women. In addition, it would be interesting to learn whether the Argentine feminist movement promoted certain political ideas or whether it acted independently. In view of the serious problems confronting Argentine women, it would be necessary to set up a ministry for women.

31. Ms. SALEMA said she had been extremely pleased to hear that the elimination of discrimination against women was one of the Argentine Government's most urgent aspirations. With regard to the difficult question of the relationship between international and domestic law, she wished to know whether many cases came before the courts, or other administrative bodies, in which women called for enforcement of the Convention in preference to the provisions of domestic legislation. It would also be interesting to know whether the Association of Women in Legal Careers was a private or a public body, whether it provided legal aid for women and, if so, whether such services were given free of charge, as well as the extent to which housewives fighting against exaggerated price increases had succeeded in bringing any pressure to bear on the Government.

Article 2

32. Ms. EVATT requested further information on the membership of the Subsecretariat for Women and the manner in which members were appointed, as well as the provisions made for its budget and staff. She wished to know whether it had access to the highest levels of decision-making and what action it was taking to identify lingering discriminatory customs, practices and attitudes. She also asked whether any action was being taken to identify particular groups of women which were more susceptible to discrimination and how the Convention and the country's initial report to the Committee were being publicized and distributed.

Article 3

33. Ms. CORTI wondered, in connection with the Subsecretariat for Women, whether there was sufficient co-ordination among the various institutions promoting women's rights. She asked how contraceptive policy was pursued, whether contraceptives were distributed free of charge and whether women received adequate information on their rights in that regard. Commending the provision of guidance and support in cases of alcoholism, drug addiction and domestic violence, she asked exactly how such guidance was provided. She requested clarification of the term "increasing democratization of the family" and asked how the Government intended to make provision for the inclusion of women in the debate concerning the broadcasting law. She also asked in which "critical areas" the training of women would be supported and what action had already been taken by the Subsecretariat to change stereotyped images of women in the media. With regard to the Subsecretariat's internal structure, she asked how the various committees worked with each other and how their activities were co-ordinated. Finally, she wondered why Argentina was home to such a strong feminist movement given the range of the activities undertaken by the Subsecretariat. She asked whether feminist organizations were on good terms with the Subsecretariat and whether such organizations felt themselves to be in opposition to the authorities.

34. Ms. ALFONSIN de FASAN (Argentina) explained to members of the Committee that she headed the General Directorate for Women rather than the Subsecretariat.

35. Ms. NOVIKOVA said that the amount of legislative change in favour of women achieved in Argentina over such a short period was most impressive. However, she wished to ask what political, economic, social and cultural measures were being taken by the Government and other bodies to ensure that all women actually enjoyed the legal rights to which they were entitled.

Article 4

36. Ms. WADSTEIN said that the report appeared to provide evidence of a misunderstanding of the term "temporary special measures". The "protective limitations" cited appeared to lead, as the representative of Argentina had recognized, to negative discrimination, whereas the real requirement was for affirmative action programmes to increase the participation of women in male-dominated areas. She would be interested to hear any comments in that connection.

Article 5

37. Ms. MONTENEGRO DE FLETCHER asked what measures the Government was taking to ensure that schoolteachers promoted a proper understanding of the roles of both men and women in raising a family. With regard to the statement that socio-cultural patterns would be transformed in parallel with the process of democratization, she wished to know whether the television programmes mentioned by the representative of Argentina would be broadcast on all channels in order to reach the broadest possible audience.

38. Ms. WADSTEIN requested statistics on the extent to which men shared in housework and day-to-day childrearing. She also asked how many families were able to afford domestic help and whether any specific measures had been taken or were envisaged to change stereotyped concepts of male and female roles, as well as to end the exploitation of women as sex objects in advertising.

Article 6

39. Ms. CORTI asked whether the Subsecretariat was taking any action to promote the social rehabilitation of prostitutes, whether any assistance was provided to battered women and whether there were any specific laws against rape. Although in her country the punishment for that crime was relatively severe, the incidence of rape continued to increase: she wondered what the current trend was in Argentina.

40. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU asked whether any punishment was imposed on men who committed adultery or whether there were any plans to amend the Penal Code to end the discriminatory treatment of women who committed adultery.

Article 7

41. Ms. CORTI said that, while the amended version of Argentina's initial report showed an encouraging increase in the number of women candidates for political office, as well as in the number of women actually elected, she wished to know more about the role of women in trade unions.

42. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA asked whether the Government or women's organizations had adopted any programmes to increase the role of women in political decision-making.

43. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU said that she was extremely impressed by the extent of women's participation in political activities in Argentina. However, with regard to the manner in which women achieved advancement within a particular political party, she wished to know how promotions were arranged and whether there was a proposal for a quota system.

Article 9

44. Ms. EVATT asked whether both parents had equal rights to pass on their nationality to their children, whether inside or outside of marriage.

Article 10

45. Ms. PILATAXI DE ARENAS asked whether the draft Declaration on coeducation drawn up by the National Chamber of Deputies had been adopted.

46. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA asked up to what age education was compulsory, what the current trends were in the school dropout rate and what programmes the Government had adopted to deal with those who dropped out. She also requested further information on the reference to correspondence courses.

47. Ms. FORDE said that Argentina's initial report provided a clear appraisal of existing problems, while emphasizing that time was required to deal with them. She wished to know whether the advisory committee mentioned on page 32 of the amended version of the report had been firmly established, how it had been functioning and what its exact terms of reference were.

48. The statistics given in the report appeared to indicate that women continued to opt for traditional careers; she wished to know what counselling was provided to female students, from what sources, whether counselling was available in schools and whether it reached a wide cross-section of the community. Noting that the male/female ratio in the professions was equal or even slightly in favour of women, while the proportion of women studying scientific or technical subjects remained comparatively low, she wondered whether the statistics provided related only to State schools and whether the intake to institutions of higher education also included students from schools other than those covered by the report. With regard to the predominance of women in the teaching profession, she wondered whether their adoption of that career was based on choice or simply on tradition.

49. Ms. ESCOBAR asked whether the correspondence courses aimed at reducing the educational drop-out rate for girls and women were run by the Government. In addition, she wished to know for what types of career those courses prepared women.

50. Ms. OESER asked how the system of correspondence courses worked and whether the Government had a policy for keeping girls and women in the normal educational

(Ms. Oeser)

process. She also wished to know whether education at all levels was free of charge in Argentina. Could everyone afford an education?

51. Ms. SALEMA asked how the National Literacy Training Plan affected women. Concerning the legal requirements for individuals who wished to stand for election, did candidates have to know how to read and write?

Article 11

52. Ms. FORDE asked whether any new studies had been done - especially among young people - on the educational dropout rate, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy. Could those problems be traced to the high unemployment rate resulting from the introduction of new technologies and were young people and women being retrained in any way for alternative employment? The report stated that women were principally guided towards employment in the service sector. Were they guided by the education system, by counselling or by pure necessity?

53. The statistics in the report seemed to indicate that unemployment was widespread among rural women. It appeared that the family farm was the norm in rural areas and that there was not much need for women to work on farms unless they belonged to a farming family. She therefore requested more information on the training being offered to rural women and, in particular, on the type of work for which they were being trained. Had the training been going on long enough for any results to be available?

54. There seemed to be a very high percentage of unemployed heads of household in Argentina and she wondered what social services were available for such people, especially if they were women heads of household.

55. Ms. OESER asked how many women there were in the work force and whether there were any statistical data on the unemployment rate. She also wished to know how many working women were in a position to use child-care centres or facilities. What was the cost of child care in relation to women's income or to family income?

56. Ms. WADSTEIN asked whether the Argentine Government was considering any changes in the legislation banning certain types of employment for women which were considered to be arduous, dangerous and unhealthy, so that such employment would also be banned for men. She also wished to know how Argentina implemented the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. How was equal value assessed? Were objective job evaluation systems in use, and had such evaluations led to any re-evaluation of women's work? Were there any statistics on men's earnings as compared with women's earnings, and on wages in male-dominated jobs as compared with female-dominated jobs of equal value?

57. She wished to know why Argentina had considered it necessary to enact special legislation to ban sex discrimination by trade unions. How was such legislation implemented and had there been any cases of sex discrimination in trade unions? She also wished to know what was the role of trade unions in Argentina. Was the

(Ms. Wadstein)

informal sector important in Argentina and what was the proportion of women in that sector? Was sexual harassment an issue? Were the retirement age and the age at which a person became eligible for a pension the same for both men and women? Finally, she asked whether the Argentine Government had any plans to introduce paternity leave.

58. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU wished to know the meaning of the term "Rural Home Extension Workers". In its work with the wife and children of the average or small producer, the Departamento de Extensión en Hogar Rural seemed to place emphasis on the head of the family and to define everything in terms of what the head of the family owned. She wished to know whether there were any plans to change that patriarchal approach, and inquired whether rural women received wages. It seemed to her that rural women, whose status in family enterprises was not clearly defined, could be easily exploited.

59. Ms. UKEJE asked whether labour legislation in Argentina was applied to the letter, since legislative provisions were very often not matched by practical application. She wished to know how a woman whose rights had been infringed could seek redress under article 14 of the Constitution.

60. Ms. SALEMA observed that the Labour Contract Law provided for job security during pregnancy but that no job security existed with regard to maternity. She asked why job security was not provided in both cases, and what kind of compensation was given when a woman was dismissed because of maternity or pregnancy.

61. She asked whether the Government had enacted minimum wage legislation to protect rural and domestic workers. Was equal pay a fact in both rural areas and domestic work? Finally, she inquired whether there were any plans to change the Domestic Workers' Statute in order to provide more protection for domestic workers.

Article 12

62. Ms. SOUMARE asked what role the Subsecretariat for Women played in the implementation of Ministry of Health programmes catering to the specific needs of women and children. She also wished to know what kind of social and health infrastructure had been established by the Ministry of Health and Social Action for the special protection of women and children. How did the Subsecretariat co-operate with women's organizations in implementing the various national plans?

63. Ms. EVATT asked whether Argentina had a specific population policy, whether family planning received public funding and support, and whether abortion was available. Were there many cases of death as a result of abortion? Was the same level of medical insurance available for single mothers as for married women? According to the report, women in domestic service represented about one third of the female work force. She wished to know whether the Argentine Government had taken any measures to provide women in domestic service with health insurance and unemployment benefits.

64. Ms. FORDE said that, while it had been pointed out that working people up to 21 years of age and disabled persons had access to special care, no reference had been made to non-working people; she requested information in that regard. She inquired whether State hospitals, which in Argentina provided free basic medical care, were well distributed throughout the country. The 1986 report had referred to the "non-existence of an adequate system of comprehensive family planning"; she wished to know whether any improvements had been made in providing family planning services throughout the country, especially in rural areas.

Article 13

65. Ms. WADSTEIN asked whether the Argentine tax system encouraged women to take up gainful employment, or whether it discouraged them from doing so. She wished to know whether couples were taxed jointly or separately and whether income tax was progressive or proportionate.

Article 14

66. Ms. CORTI said that, in Argentina, rural women continued to perform the most arduous agricultural tasks using primitive farm implements, while men often operated agricultural machinery. She wished to know what was being done to improve that situation. Further, she asked how seasonal workers were paid, whether the kind of work they did was recognized as part-time work, whether they were eligible for social security when they worked, and what role trade unions played with regard to rural working women. According to the report, rural women did not figure in registers or censuses because only the husband was shown as receiving wages. That practice was highly discriminatory and she wished to know whether the Argentine Government planned to change it. Health posed a serious problem in rural areas and she inquired whether there was any programme to prevent infectious diseases among the rural population. Finally, she pointed out that Argentina's efforts in the area of rural housing had been inadequate.

67. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA wished to know what role women played in livestock raising, which was a major source of income for the Argentine economy. Further, she requested information about the system of land tenure in Argentina. Finally, she wished to know what percentage of the Argentine population was indigenous, and what was being done to protect indigenous women.

68. Ms. WADSTEIN also wished to know how land was owned in Argentina - by the State, by a few large landowners or by a large number of small landowners. Was land owned by those who worked it, and did women own land?

69. Ms. LAIOU-ANTONIOU asked whether the co-operatives mentioned in the report were exclusively women's co-operatives, how such co-operatives were formed, and how many and what types of co-operatives existed.

Article 15

70. Ms. PILATAXI DE ARENAS asked what impact Government programmes had had in changing the public's perception of male violence against women as a sign of

(Ms. Pilataxi de Arenas)

virility. Article 119 of the Penal Code did not specify aggravating circumstances with regard to rape, except in the case of girls aged 12 to 15. Was that offence not a crime when the victims were aged over 15 or under 12 years of age?

71. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA asked whether the Government had any plans to legalize abortion.

72. Ms. UKEJE observed that, for the disposition of certain categories of property, the consent of both parties was necessary even after a marriage had been dissolved. What choice was left to the other party when one party refused to give consent?

Article 16

73. Ms. MONTENEGRO DE FLETCHER requested statistics and data on common-law relationships, divorce and marriage in Argentina. According to the report, the current legal provisions designed to ensure that the father met his obligations in respect of spousal support were regarded as inadequate and ineffective. She wished to know what changes were being planned to remedy that deficiency, especially with regard to the divorced or abandoned woman who had to care for her own children. Finally, she wished to know what criteria were followed for the payment of alimony allowances and how prevalent such payments were in Argentina.

74. Ms. EVATT requested more information on the new grounds for divorce and asked how many women's refuges or shelters were available to battered wives.

75. Ms. GUAN Minqian asked whether abortion was legal or illegal in Argentina and why it had been included among the offences involving women as the active agent.

76. The CHAIRPERSON noted that, according to the report, article 92 of the Penal Code provided for a harsher penalty for personal injury if the parties were related. She wished to know whether the penalty was different if the parties were not related. She also wished to know whether the sentence "This is ... a very common occurrence in certain sectors of our society" referred to the fact that the parties were related or to the frequency of the offence.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.