



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

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Second session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 5 August 1983, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. IDER

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

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

Initial report of the German Democratic Republic (CEDAW/C/5/Add.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Hucke (German Democratic Republic) took a place at the Committee table.
2. Mr. HUCKE (German Democratic Republic), replying to questions asked at the Committee's 12th meeting, said that the equality of women was not achieved through the mere existence of laws and legal norms but involved a lengthy social process during which the material and ideological prerequisites for such equality had to be created.
3. Rather than simply meeting the formal statistical requirements of equality for women by establishing certain quotas, it was much more the concern of his country to create the conditions necessary for enabling women, through education and training, to do the same work as men and to achieve the same or better results. Equality meant not giving preference to women or to men but entrusting a given task to the person most capable of doing it, whether man or woman. That genuine kind of equality was the object of the measures taken by his Government in compliance, in particular, with article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
4. In answer to the question asked on the subject, he said that, given that concern, the high percentage of women and girls attending engineering or technical schools did not mean that a comparably large number of women were already in a position to manage industrial or agricultural enterprises. The figures given in the report were merely indicative of how far the process had advanced. The same was true with regard to the number of women in senior political and administrative positions. He would recommend to his Government that it should take the request for comparative figures, one made by a number of experts, into consideration in the preparation of future reports. The large number of women members of the People's Chamber and of women mayors and judges was due above all to the fact that they were directly elected to those offices by the people, implying that they enjoyed the confidence of both men and women. Since women had had only 20 or 30 years' experience in such fields of political management, the progress made might well be called remarkable.
5. Some questions had been asked on the political system of the German Democratic Republic and on the status and implementation of international conventions. He said that the supreme organ of government was the People's Chamber, with 500 members belonging to nine parliamentary groupings of all political parties and mass organizations, among which was the Women's Democratic Federation (DFD). Voting or standing for election was not subject to any restrictions based on social status, nationality, level of education, profession, property, income or similar criteria. The Council of State represented the country internationally and ratified and

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rescinded State treaties and other treaties binding under international law. The Council of Ministers, the Government of the country, ensured the implementation of laws and decisions and formulated the tasks of foreign and domestic policy which, in the form of draft laws and recommendations, were presented to the People's Chamber. Members of the Council of Ministers were elected by the People's Chamber and could be recalled by it. Local representative bodies operated as organs of State power in the counties, districts, towns, boroughs and villages; like the People's Chamber, they were elected for a period of five years.

6. As was the case in most countries, it was laid down in the Constitution and other legal regulations that international treaties and conventions had to be transformed into national law. That transformation could take different forms, subject to existing laws dealing with the relevant matters. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had been published in the official gazette after its ratification and entry into force.

7. A number of experts had raised questions of a legal character on the implementation of the various provisions of the Convention in the German Democratic Republic. Those provisions were fully covered by the Family Law, the Civil Law and the Labour Code, so that it had not been found necessary to initiate new juridical measures.

8. In answer to the question whether the principle of equality was enshrined in the Constitution, he could reply in the affirmative. Equal rights for men and women were guaranteed under article 20, and equal pay for equal work under article 24.

9. Article 38 of the Constitution extended the special protection of the State to marriage, the family and motherhood through special measures and allowances. Detailed information had been requested on social measures taken in recent years to support women and protect mothers. Special legislation in the Labour Code was designed to protect women and young people at work against health hazards and to ensure strict observance of regulations on the lifting and carrying of heavy weights.

10. For a number of years, about half of all those participating in adult education had been women, and special encouragement and assistance had been given to mothers. Full support was provided to women undergoing further training who had been away from work for some time because of family commitments, mainly through on-the-job training courses. Section 241 of the Labour Code provided for special measures to give encouragement and support in training and further education to women with young children and required enterprises to grant such women every possible assistance for that purpose.

11. The systematic advancement of qualified women could be seen in the light-industry sector where over 70 per cent of the work force and 50 per cent of the university and college graduates were women. While almost half of all managerial

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functions were carried out by women, at the highest levels the proportion of women was low. There were plans to change that situation by the training of 1,000 women, in particular of specially talented college graduates, for managerial positions by 1990. Contracts would have precisely defined promotion schedules, and students would be able to call on experienced colleagues as mentors. Such schemes were designed to meet the obligations imposed by article 30 of the Labour Code.

12. There was in the German Democratic Republic an extensive system of protection for pregnant women and mothers. Expectant mothers could not be assigned work which might endanger their health; if they had to be transferred to another place of work, they continued to receive their former wages; and night work and overtime were forbidden. Expectant mothers, mothers of children up to one year old and single mothers or fathers with children up to three years old could not be dismissed from their jobs. Enterprises and institutions could not refuse to employ expectant mothers or mothers with small children because of their situation. There were special prenatal-advice centres and recreation homes for pregnant women. Maternity leave extended to 6 weeks before and 20 weeks after childbirth, and maternity allowances equivalent to net average earnings were payable by the social-insurance scheme during that period. Almost all mothers gave birth at in-patient facilities, and the cost of hospitalization was also borne by the social-insurance scheme. The governmental birth allowance was 1,000 marks for every child. Nursing mothers were exempted from working overtime or at night, received monthly financial benefits for up to six months after childbirth and could attend postnatal advice centres.

13. Those mothers who wished to look after their children at home during the first year could be granted leave without pay for that period. After the birth of a second or subsequent child, mothers were entitled to a social-insurance allowance of between 75 and 90 per cent of their net average earnings, depending on the number of children, until the child's first birthday. Mothers were entitled to resume their former jobs even if they stayed at home up to the third birthday of their children.

14. Monthly children's benefits, paid regardless of the income and the social position of parents until the completion of general schooling, amounted to 20 marks each for the first and second child, 50 marks for the third, 60 marks for the fourth and 70 marks for the fifth and any subsequent child.

15. Single mothers received the previously mentioned social-insurance allowance even after the birth of their first child if no place was available in a crèche, and the allowance was payable up to the child's third birthday. No stigma was attached to single parenthood or birth outside of wedlock; there were laws against discrimination on such grounds and the attitudes and values implicit in moral condemnation had been broken down.

16. The life of women had changed most visibly in the villages of the German Democratic Republic, where the necessary conditions had been created for the full emancipation and equality of women farm workers. They were able to acquire

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knowledge and experience, they learned to master up-to-date machinery, and 79.4 per cent of all women in agriculture had now completed vocational training. As members of agricultural production co-operatives, rural women were better able to avail themselves of their rights, had regular working hours and free time and had been granted the right to education and knowledge. The co-operatives had brought shorter working hours, a reduction in heavy physical labour, a paid day off each month and paid annual holidays. Crèches, kindergartens, rural health centres, clubs and libraries had been established. Working conditions had been improved by the introduction of industrial methods of production and the application of modern techniques. Women had become responsible for enormous national economic assets in a manner which did not endanger their well-being, since modern farm machinery had been designed specifically for their use. Discrimination against women agricultural workers had been overcome, and there were now no differences between their social status and that of women industrial workers.

17. The 8.9 million women and girls in the German Democratic Republic enjoyed other social benefits in addition to those already mentioned. Mothers with two or more young children enjoyed a 40-hour working week on full pay, instead of the normal working week of 43-3/4 hours. All married women, mothers with young children and single women aged 40 or over had a day off with pay every month for household chores. Single mothers or fathers were entitled to leave with pay in order to care for sick children, for various periods, according to the number of children they had.

18. Some experts had asked for information on the de facto situation with regard to the equality of women in the social and private spheres. The rights of women to political participation, to equal education and training, to work and to equal pay had become a reality. Mothers were helped to exercise their rights by the provision of facilities to care for their children while they were at work. Almost all children in the relevant age group attended kindergarten, and 61 per cent of younger children were cared for in crèches. Working women with children were the chief beneficiaries of the social-welfare measures introduced in recent years.

19. However, there was also a need for changes in attitudes, and the social advancement of women was taking place much faster than the changes required in family life. All too often, household chores and the care of children still prevented women from availing themselves fully of career and social opportunities. Ultimately the emancipation of women was possible only through the emancipation of both sexes. Women's equality had always been regarded not as an issue setting women against men but as one concerning society as a whole and an issue that could only be tackled by men and women working together in public life and within marriage and the family. Many values required rethinking, and the usefulness of many old customs had been questioned. Traditions everywhere, including in the home, were being tested to see whether they merited to survive today.

20. The measures taken to protect working mothers had been a factor in the appreciable rise in the birth rate in the German Democratic Republic, concerning which a question had been asked. An important law passed in 1972 guaranteed women

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the right to decide on the number and timing of the children they bore and the right to make such decisions inter alia through a termination of pregnancy. Accordingly, it could safely be assumed that the roughly 240,000 children born in 1982 - some 58,000 more than in 1975 - were really wanted by their parents.

21. Detailed questions had been asked about the political sphere of action of the women's organization and other organizations specifically for the promotion of the principle of equality. The Democratic Women's Federation of Germany (DFD), founded in 1947, had mobilized great numbers of women, far more than its 1.4 million members, and had brought them into public life, encouraged many of them to enter employment, and helped to achieve equal rights for men and women. Among its concerns were further training for women, good-neighbour schemes, measures to assist working mothers, and leisure activities. It operated more than 200 advice centres, almost 7,000 amateur art clubs and over 6,000 sports clubs. There were 22,000 deputies who were women elected with a DFD mandate, and in the People's Chamber - the national parliament - the DFD was represented by its own group of deputies. A major aim of the organization had been to preserve peace and protect the lives of children from another war. The 1982 DFD congress had renewed and strengthened demands that no more United States missiles should be deployed in Western Europe because such deployment would mean a significant increase in the danger of war. The DFD had always supported peace campaigns and maintained friendly links with various peace organizations throughout the world. It was equally committed to support for international solidarity and had helped women in other countries in their struggle for equal rights.

22. A question had been asked on the problem of divorce in the German Democratic Republic. In the past, marriages had been relatively stable because they had often been held together by property rights, by a relationship of subordination and by public discrimination against divorced people. Under socialism, however, marriage was based primarily on inner bonds, which were subject to much greater strain and depended on the stability of love. There were approximately 40,000 divorces each year, which meant the annual dissolution of 1 per cent of all existing marriages. There were many reasons for the high incidence of divorce, including the economic independence which most women had achieved, their growing self-awareness and their expectation of equality in a relationship. The fact that 30 per cent of all divorces affected people aged 26 or under was a sign that young people often made very high demands on their partners but were not themselves ready to meet the challenge that living together represented. One useful response had been the establishment of marriage and sex counselling centres where psychologists, educationalists, lawyers, doctors and welfare officers helped young people to overcome their difficulties.

23. Several members had asked about prostitution in the German Democratic Republic. Prostitution was incompatible with the nature of socialism and, with the construction of a socialist society in his country, the social causes of prostitution had been entirely eradicated. Prostitution was moreover prohibited under article 123 of the Penal Code.

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24. A number of members had asked whether violations of the principle of equality between men and women were punishable. Criminal acts against a woman's person were punishable under the Penal Code, although the number of such crimes was relatively low. In the case of violations of labour law provisions, enterprises and institutions, whether nationally owned, co-operative or private, were bound to correct such violations by rule of the Labour Court. Women could also file claims in court under civil and family law and could appeal against offences in the administrative field.

25. Equality for women was also implemented through the women's promotion plans of factories and institutions, which formed part of the collective agreements concluded annually between union and management. The enterprise's trade union and its women's organization monitored the implementation of such plans and brought cases of non-observance to the attention of management, employees and, if necessary, the disputes commission. Members of the latter were elected in direct and secret ballot by employees of the enterprise and had far-reaching powers to call violators of the women's promotion plan to account. If the parties concerned were not satisfied with the decision of the disputes commission they could appeal to the Labour Court.

26. The foregoing replies were necessarily general in nature, but all questions and observations raised during the consideration of his country's initial report would be transmitted to his Government and taken into account in the elaboration of future reports. While he could already make available excerpts from some of his country's more important legal provisions on women, the request that excerpts from the relevant domestic legislation should be annexed to reports would also be taken into account in drafting future reports.

27. Mr. NORDENFELT commended the representative of the German Democratic Republic on his very thorough response. The additional details provided shed some light on the philosophy guiding that country's policy in dealing with the status of women.

28. Ms. MUKAYIRANGA thanked the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his clear replies but noted that they raised further questions. For instance, while she commended the special measures envisaged for pregnant and nursing mothers, she wondered whether women were not being overprotected in that regard. Might not such measures be motivated less by concern for women than by a conscious policy of increasing the birth rate to combat the general aging of the population?

29. Ms. EL-FETOUH thanked the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his very detailed reply and expressed the hope that his country's next report would answer some of the questions that still remained unanswered, for instance, questions regarding the economic independence of women in marriage and following divorce.

30. Ms. CARON commended the representative of the German Democratic Republic on his detailed response and for his frank recognition that there was still room for improvement in the situation of women in his country. While his reply afforded an

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understanding of the situation of women in the German Democratic Republic, she wondered whether it did not also reveal some discrimination. For instance, it appeared that only women were given a day's paid leave each month to do housework and hence that men were not expected to do housework. She hoped that that point would be clarified in his country's next report. Similarly, with regard to the paid leave granted to women to care for a sick child, she hoped that men were also entitled to such leave since caring for a sick child was the responsibility of both parents.

31. Ms. PEYTCHEVA thanked the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his very thorough response and hoped that the information and experience he had shared with the Committee would be put to good use in the Committee's future work of securing equal rights for women.

32. Ms. BIRYUKOVA said that she was delighted at the speed with which the representative of the German Democratic Republic had prepared exhaustive answers to the Committee's questions. The Committee's work could prove very effective if it was based on a fruitful dialogue with representatives of States Parties. She proposed therefore that the Committee should recommend to States Parties that they make full use of the experience described in the reports of the German Democratic Republic and other countries.

33. Ms. MUKAYIRANGA asked whether women in the German Democratic Republic could transmit their nationality on the same basis as men.

34. Ms. CORTES expressed appreciation for the response by the representative of the German Democratic Republic and, in particular, for the insight into the way in which efforts to ensure complete equality were regarded as an ongoing process. One condition that must be taken into account in countries' reports was the particular environment of women in the country concerned. The report of the German Democratic Republic had taken that environment into account, although there was still some room for further elaboration.

35. Ms. GONZALEZ-MARTINEZ pointed out that representatives of States Parties could respond to any of the Committee's outstanding questions by either sending additional information to the Secretariat or by providing it in their second report. Since the Committee might otherwise never complete its consideration of initial reports, she suggested that no more questions should be put to the representative of the German Democratic Republic at the current session.

36. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD thanked the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his detailed response and expressed the hope that the second report would include a description of his country's political and institutional organization as guidance to members of the Committee. She hoped that her suggestion would also be taken into account by the Working Group in preparing the general reporting guidelines, for such information would greatly facilitate the Committee's work.



37. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his very thorough reply and for initiating a dialogue between Governments and the Committee. If she heard no objections, she would take it that the Committee agreed that any unanswered or new questions should be transmitted by that representative to his Government, so that the latter might provide additional information to the Secretariat or include it in its next report.
38. It was so decided.
39. Mr. Hucke (German Democratic Republic) withdrew.
40. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Ruiz Cabaffas (Mexico) took a place at the Committee table.
41. Mr. RUIZ CABAÑAS (Mexico), answering questions on his country's initial report (CEDAW/C/5/Add.2), observed that the problem of discrimination against women persisted throughout the world and that Mexico was no exception. It was his Government's full awareness of that problem, however, that had prompted it to work for rapid change. Pursuant to article 18 (1) of the Convention, Mexico's initial report had highlighted the main legal changes introduced over the past 10 years that had resulted in the creation of an institutional framework for equality between men and women. The approach adopted in the report had consisted therefore in drawing attention to the legislative, judicial, administrative and other measures taken to implement the Convention.
42. His Government was firmly committed to eliminating discrimination against women and believed that part of that task lay in strengthening political will and public support for full equality between men and women and in reversing centuries-old prejudices.
43. The only way to achieve that goal in the long term, however, was to promote the country's overall economic and social development: without development, the elimination of discrimination against women would be impossible. Thus, Mexico's latest National Development Plan, 1983-1988, was guided, inter alia, by the concern to improve the situation of women, on an equal footing with men and as agents and beneficiaries of the development process, and to offer women equal opportunities in all areas of national life. Thus, not only legislative but also political, economic and administrative measures had been taken over the past 10 years to increase women's participation in all areas of economic, social and political life, within the framework of the national development effort.
44. Between 1960 and 1980, the population of Mexico, roughly half of which was women, had almost doubled, and had changed from a predominantly rural to a largely urban population. In 1980, more than half the population had been less than 20 years old, with 45 per cent less than 15 years old. Viewed in that context, women in Mexico had made important gains in the economic life of the country. The number of working women had increased by 86.3 per cent between 1970 and 1979, as compared with an increase of 38.7 per cent in the male working population.

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45. Education constituted the major avenue for social change and development in Mexico, and women had made progress in that area in recent years. Literacy among women above 15 years of age had more than doubled between 1960 and 1980, with illiterate women accounting for only 9.1 per cent of all women in 1980. The enrolment of women in primary, secondary, vocational and higher education had increased significantly in the period from 1970 to 1982. The enrolment of women in teacher-training institutions, where they accounted for more than half of all students, had risen from 90,000 to 140,000 between 1977 and 1982. The latter figures, in particular, highlighted the emphasis placed on education in Mexico.

46. Turning to the questions which had been put to him by members of the Committee, he said that his delegation was unable at present to answer those concerning the improvement of the situation of rural women and concerning legal proceedings involving cases of discrimination against women. However, information pertaining to those questions would be contained in the country's next report to the Committee.

47. A number of Committee members had asked about obstacles encountered by the Mexican Government in implementing the Convention as a result of the current economic crisis. Current economic conditions had in fact severely restricted the Government's ability to meet its obligations to women under the Convention. Furthermore, long-standing prejudices and customs in a patriarchal society made it difficult to bring about change on behalf of women in many sectors. The attitudes of women themselves often made it difficult for change to occur. The effect of the economic crisis could be seen in the inflation and unemployment in Mexico, which had had an especially strong effect on women both at work and in the home. In response, the Mexican Government had set the alleviation of the economic crisis as a major objective of its National Development Plan. Women had an important role to play in the implementation of that Plan and must participate on an equal footing with men in the building of the country to ensure national independence and guarantee individual and collective freedoms within a democratic framework.

48. Women's participation in development must be viewed within the context of the National Development Plan and premised on legislative guarantees of equality for both sexes. In recent years, the Constitution and more than 80 laws had been revised to that end.

49. With regard to the abolition of discriminatory legislation since ratification of the Convention, he pointed out that it had not been necessary for Mexico to abolish any of its laws, since legislative reforms had been initiated prior to ratification of the Convention. Moreover, if an individual felt that a given law was unconstitutional, he or she had recourse to the process of amparo. While it was difficult to specify the extent to which Mexican women had access to the courts, many women's organizations existed in the country to protect women against violations of their rights. Many women made use of the mass media to publicize incidents in which women's rights had been violated, and some political parties publicly advocated women's causes.

(Mr. Ruiz Cabafias, Mexico)

50. Upon ratifying the Convention, Mexico had expressed the reservation that, while it would implement the Convention in accordance with the modalities and procedures prescribed by national legislation, the granting of material benefits under that instrument would be contingent upon the availability of financial resources. For example, the Mexican Government felt that it could not fully implement the provisions of article 10 (c) because of its financial implications.
51. One member of the Committee had inquired about the admission of students to schools and asked what financial assistance was provided for Mexican students studying abroad. In reply to the first question, he said that education at state schools at all levels was free in Mexico and students were admitted to schools on the basis of the geographical proximity of a school to a child's home. With regard to the second question, he said that students wishing to study abroad at higher levels, particularly in preparation for technical careers, could apply for scholarships through the National Council of Science and Technology. Generally speaking, scholarship applications were considered from the perspective of national development priorities. In recent years, scholarships had been awarded for study in the social sciences as well as in technical fields. The fellowships were awarded primarily at the graduate level. Fellowships were also awarded by foreign Governments under the auspices of international cultural agreements.
52. In answer to the question that had been asked concerning the words "live honestly" used in section 13 of the Mexican report in referring to the requirements for being a citizen of Mexico, he said what was meant was that an individual must not have been convicted in a court of a crime.
53. His Government believed that women had a definite role to play in determining the number and spacing of their children; despite the possible adverse economic consequences of having a numerous family, women were not forced to accept family-planning methods. Vast strides had been made in the area of family planning in Mexico during the past 10 years, and a significant reduction in the population growth rate had been achieved.
54. In reply to a question regarding the remedy of amparo, he stated that that right was guaranteed in article 103 of the Constitution and was protected in practice by the federal tribunals in accordance with article 8 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The remedy of amparo effectively protected individuals against arbitrary acts committed by the State.
55. Abortion was prohibited by article 319 of the Penal Code except in cases of rape or where a mother's life was in danger. Statistics were lacking because abortions were usually carried out in secret. Women's organizations in Mexico were pressing for the removal of penalties for abortion.
56. One member of the Committee had asked to what extent Mexican women were aware of their rights under the Convention. Such awareness differed greatly between town and country and also varied with educational level, but in the urban centres

(Mr. Ruiz Cabañas, Mexico)

Mexican women were well aware, if not of the Convention, at least of their relevant inalienable constitutional rights. The Government was also making progress, through publicity campaigns and the efforts of women's organizations, in making rural women more fully aware of their rights.

57. In the matter of possible intervention in family affairs, normally no one could tell a mother what to do; however, if either spouse had a complaint, he or she could bring it to the family court, which would then decide whether the mother's actions were in any way damaging to family life.

58. As to the naming of a child, he said that a child born out of wedlock had its mother's surname and its father's surname if the child was recognized by the father. The child born in wedlock automatically had both names, the father's surname being followed by the mother's. A woman could use her maiden or married name, as she wished. For legal purposes, however, she always kept her maiden name in official documents without her married name.

59. In conclusion he said that further information would be provided in due course to the Secretariat.

60. Ms. MARTINEZ said she would like to know whether a husband in Mexico was entitled to a widower's pension.

61. Ms. BIRYUKOVA said that she welcomed the data and statistics regarding the situation of women in Mexico, especially in the field of education, because they showed how much progress had been made in recent years, and she hoped that even more would be provided in Mexico's next report. She also hoped that Mexico's next report would indicate what efforts were being made by Mexico to promote international peace and security, reduce international tension, hasten disarmament and establish mutually advantageous relations between States as pre-conditions for eliminating the obstacles to the implementation of the Convention.

62. Ms. CORTES welcomed the facts and figures provided to complement the legal information contained in Mexico's report. She felt that in the specific area of the woman's role in family planning there was a need for further study of both attitudes and practices.

63. Ms. MACEDO DE SHEPPARD, Ms. PATINO DE MARTINEZ, Mr. NORDENFELT, Ms. ESCUDERO-MUSCOSO, Ms. SMITH, Ms. DE REGO DA COSTA SALEMA MOURA RIBEIRO, Ms. BIRYUKOVA, Ms. CORTES and Ms. MUKAYIRANGA joined in commending the representative of Mexico for a thorough, diligent and frank statement which dealt honestly and openly with the obstacles Mexico faced in implementing the Convention.

64. Mr. RUIZ CABAÑAS (Mexico) said that he was grateful for the favourable comments on his statement and that his Government was satisfied with the progress women had made in Mexico. Replying to a point raised, he said that in Mexico women were fully involved in development efforts both as full participants and as beneficiaries.

65. Mr. Ruiz Cabañas (Mexico) withdrew.

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## OTHER MATTERS

66. Mrs. SELLAMI-MESLEM (Representative of the Secretary-General) noted that a question had been raised regarding the issuance of a visa to a member of the Committee by the United States authorities and read out the following statement from the Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General in charge of the Office of Legal Affairs:

"Under Section 11 of the Headquarters Agreement between the United Nations and the United States the federal, state and local authorities of the United States shall not impose any impediments to transit to or from the headquarters district to persons invited to the headquarters district on official business. While the Headquarters Agreement does not provide for any specific delays within which visas should be granted, it is generally accepted that such delays are matters for the discretion of the host country. In information provided to the Secretary-General, the United States Government has stated that it generally requires 10 to 15 working days to process visa applications."

67. Ms. VELIZ DE VILLALVILLA said that even after receiving her visa, she had been kept waiting for two hours at Kennedy Airport; she assured the members that she had done her utmost to meet her obligations and to arrive on time.

68. Mr. ROSENSTOCK (United States of America) said that a notice of 10 to 15 working days was required in order to have a visa issued and that in the case in question, although he regretted the brief delay, the visa had been issued within that time.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.