



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

Distr.: General
22 February 2023

Original: English

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

Summary record of the 1955th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 16 February 2023, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Peláez Narváez

Contents

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

Seventh periodic report of Slovenia

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

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



The meeting was called to order at 10.00 a.m.

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

Seventh periodic report of Slovenia ([CEDAW/C/SVN/7](#); [CEDAW/C/SVN/QPR/7](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Slovenia joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair**, welcoming the delegation of Slovenia to the meeting, explained that additional members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
3. **Mr. Maljevac** (Slovenia), introducing his country's seventh periodic report ([CEDAW/C/SVN/7](#)), said that, before being adopted by the Government, the report had been reviewed by the Interdepartmental Commission for Human Rights, a body composed of representatives of all ministries, as well as by the Prime Minister's Office, the Statistical Office, the Office for Nationalities, the police, civil society and academia. Civil society, in particular, played a key role in his country's efforts to implement the Convention. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were represented in the Expert Council for Gender Equality and were currently participating in the drafting of new resolutions on gender-based and family violence and on gender equality. Slovenia used the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and its follow-up process as its main legal policy framework for designing, implementing and assessing the effects of measures and strategies to eliminate discrimination against women, and the Government's current priorities in that field had been set out in a new draft Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2023–2030.
4. The year 2022 had marked a breakthrough with respect to women's political participation in Slovenia. Following the parliamentary and local elections held that year, women accounted for 40 per cent of members of the National Assembly, 17.5 per cent of members of the National Council and 35 per cent of municipal and city councillors. For the first time in history, women held the positions of President of the Republic, President of the National Assembly, State Attorney General and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs.
5. However, according to the Slovenian Directors' Association, gender balance goals had been achieved in only 18 of the 56 State-owned and publicly listed companies participating in a national initiative for voluntary gender diversity targets in management and supervisory bodies. Enhancing the participation of women in economic decision-making therefore remained high on the political agenda, and the Government had taken a series of measures in recent years to reduce the gender pay gap and gender pension gap. Those measures had included the adoption of the *Moje delo. Moja pokojnina* (My Work. My Pension) project to raise awareness about the gender pension gap, as well as amendments to the Parental Protection and Family Benefits Act designed to boost the pensions of mothers who worked part-time and to give each parent 60 days of non-transferable paid parental leave. Efforts had also been made to strengthen the role of fathers during young childhood through the education and training of health and social professionals and the development of guidelines on fathering.
6. The Government of Slovenia had put in place a package of projects and programmes to support vulnerable people during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. At the start of the pandemic, a helpline for women victims of violence had been established, and courts had classified all cases involving violence against women as urgent in order to avoid procedural delays.
7. Legislative measures had also been taken to prevent and combat gender-based violence. There had been two relevant changes to the Criminal Code. The section on addressing sexual integrity had been amended to reflect the principle of "yes means yes" (affirmative consent), and the concept of hate crime had been introduced to ensure that offences committed as a result of hatred or prejudice were punished more severely. Moreover, victim support services had been set up at the two largest courts of first instance in Slovenia, and the Criminal Procedure Act had been amended to facilitate the anonymization of the victim's data in proceedings. Following a revision in 2022, the Higher Education Act provided for the right of every student to a safe learning environment, with

zero tolerance for sexual and other harassment and ill-treatment. In 2021, the Judicial Training Centre had held two national conferences on domestic violence, and a three-year awareness-raising programme for children on human trafficking had also been launched. Further steps had been taken towards eliminating discrimination in the only women's prison in the country, such as the introduction of overnight visits and the development of programmes to strengthen the mental health of women prisoners.

8. The Government was committed to combating online gender-based violence, especially on social media. It had supported several NGO-led initiatives aimed at breaking down prejudices and gender stereotypes and encouraging more girls to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), including a prize for the female engineer of the year. Education reforms had been made to incorporate digital training into all levels of the national curriculum, while the Promotion of Digital Inclusion Act had been passed to ensure that everyone benefited from the digital transformation.

9. Women's sexual and reproductive health care had been provided throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with only brief interruptions to certain services during the first year. Attention was currently focused on screening for the early detection of colorectal, breast and cervical cancer. The Government would address the gender pay gap in the health and social care sector.

10. An evaluation of the second national action plan on the women and peace and security agenda was being carried out. The outcome of that evaluation would serve as the basis for a third action plan. Work had also begun on the preparation of a new strategy to ensure the mainstreaming of gender equality and the empowerment of women in the country's foreign policy activities and goals.

11. **A representative of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia**, speaking via video link, said that the Ombudsman had been granted category A status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in 2021.

12. The European Institute for Gender Equality had calculated that the Gender Equality Index for Slovenia was only 67.5 per cent, indicating that progress on gender equality had been slower than in other European countries. The gender pay gap persisted and women remained at higher risk of poverty than men. Although the proportion of women elected in the elections of 2022 had increased, women still accounted for only 13.7 per cent of elected mayors in the country. Furthermore, female journalists, female politicians and women in other public positions regularly faced harassment and sexist insults. Research had shown that childcare and household tasks still tended to be carried out by women and that their domestic workload had only increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the addition of duties related to homeschooling and caring for elderly relatives.

13. Slovenia was in need of more effective policies and measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women. According to the most recent national survey, 22 per cent of women in Slovenia had experienced physical or sexual violence and three quarters of victims of intimate partner violence were women. Moreover, most incidents of violence against women continued to go unreported.

14. For many years, the Ombudsman had been calling on the Government to improve the living conditions of the Roma community. Roma women in the south-east of Slovenia, who lived in segregated Roma settlements, were disproportionately affected by the lack of access to clean water and sanitation. There was a correlation between poor living conditions and poor performance at school, with many Roma girls failing to complete their education. Furthermore, social workers had identified cases of early marriage, extramarital union of minors and teenage pregnancy in Roma communities, and Roma women were considerably more likely than other women in Slovenia to be hospitalized owing to complications during pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period.

Articles 1–6

15. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to commend the efforts made by the State party during the reporting period to support families and women and to harmonize its legislation with international standards. However, many women and girls continued to encounter

discrimination, stigmatization and violence. The situation had grown worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, and there was an increasing disparity between the quality of the support services available in the capital city and rural areas.

16. The Committee would welcome further information on the support offered by the State to NGOs. He wished to know how much money the Government set aside each year to help to fund organizations that worked to protect and promote women's rights. It would also be useful to understand how many such organizations had been formally registered and accredited, and what process NGOs had to follow in order to qualify for State funding.

17. He asked whether the Convention took precedence over domestic legislation, whether the concept of discrimination against women, as defined under article 1 of the Convention, had been integrated into national law, and whether a definition of equality between men and women had been incorporated into the Constitution. He wondered how many criminal cases involving violations of international human rights had been heard in Slovenian courts in recent years and how many of them had concerned allegations of gender-based discrimination. Information about the number of times the Convention had been invoked in court judgments would also be of interest.

18. The Committee would welcome further information on the availability of support services for women with drug or alcohol dependence. He also wished to know what measures had been taken to provide female victims of violence with witness protection services. He would appreciate confirmation as to whether the latest national plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) had been adopted and whether work under that plan had begun.

19. **Mr. Maljevac (Slovenia)** said that the Government took consultation with civil society very seriously, cooperating with NGOs through structured dialogues. A capacity-building session would be held in May 2023 to train NGOs in participating in work related to the United Nations treaty bodies.

20. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, prior to its adoption, the State party's report had been discussed at a session of the Expert Council for Gender Equality. It had then been submitted to the National Assembly and posted on the Government's website. A seminar aimed at improving knowledge of the Convention among NGOs and lawyers had been delivered by the Human Rights Ombudsman in February 2020.

21. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities was responsible for implementation of the Protection Against Discrimination Act, which had been adopted in 2016. Under that Act, the Advocate of the Principle of Equality had been established as one of the two Slovenian entities competent to handle complaints concerning discrimination against women, the other being the Human Rights Ombudsman. The two entities were well organized and well funded: in 2021, the Advocate had had 19 staff members and had received almost €1.3 million, while the Ombudsman had had 50 staff members and had received €3.58 million.

22. **A representative of Slovenia** said that discrimination on grounds such as gender was prohibited in all spheres. The Convention was frequently invoked by the courts or the parties in cases concerning, inter alia, the representation of women, asylum and exploitation of prostitution, as well as in relation to damages and compensation.

23. Hatred and incitement to intolerance were prohibited under the Constitution and certain forms had been established as criminal offences. Recognizing hate speech as a priority, the Office of the State Prosecutor General had established a group to monitor the issue and the Government planned to create a council to analyse, advise on and propose action to address hate speech. While the number of convictions for hate speech was low, a recent high-profile case, in which two journalists had been able to bring civil and criminal proceedings against a politician for offensive remarks, demonstrated that the judicial system had the structures in place to respond appropriately.

24. The country saw 5 to 10 instances of femicide each year, with many of the victims having previously been subject to domestic violence that had gone unreported. With the aim of empowering victims and informing them of their rights, awareness-raising mechanisms had been established and a brochure had been written. Victims of domestic violence and

sexual assault were eligible for free legal aid, subject only to an assessment of the threat against them. Victims in Slovenia tended to be more satisfied with the State response than victims in other countries of the European Union. All efforts in the area had been undertaken in cooperation with NGOs.

25. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, in 2022, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities had provided over €21 million for the financing of NGO programmes. Thirty six such programmes, with an allocation of €4.7 million, had been for the prevention of violence, including violence against women.

26. **A representative of Slovenia** said that discrimination and the forms thereof were defined in Articles 4 and 12 of the Protection Against Discrimination Act. The Act also authorized the Advocate of the Principle of Equality to examine cases of discrimination, adopt special measures to support victims and represent victims before the courts. The Human Rights Ombudsman Act was another key tool for addressing instances of discrimination.

27. **Mr. Safarov**, noting the existence in the State party of an electronic database of all court decisions, said that he would be grateful for statistical data on the implementation of the Convention in such decisions. It was important to know what place the Convention occupied within the Slovenian legal order. He would particularly appreciate an answer to his question about how the State party had integrated into national law the definition of discrimination contained in article 1 of the Convention.

28. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the courts had made direct reference to the Convention in five cases; the Constitutional Court, for example, had done so in a case related to the inadequate representation of women on electoral lists. The Convention had also been mentioned on numerous occasions by the Advocate of the Principle of Equality when addressing complaints concerning, inter alia, ill-treatment in the labour market, the selection of candidates and the collection of personal data by employers, as well as in its recommendations on amendments to the Societies Act and the Companies Act.

29. **A representative of Slovenia** said that all those employed in the judiciary were trained on the Convention, and a major seminar on gender equality would take place in April 2023. It was hoped that the continued training would result in more frequent references to the Convention in Slovenian case law.

30. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to know how the State party planned to strengthen the mandate of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and increase the resources allocated to it. He wondered whether the Ministry had a presence in all regions of the country and whether gender focal points had been established in each ministry and region. Moreover, it would be useful to know whether the concept of gender-responsive budgeting had been incorporated into the State party's budget laws and put into practice by municipalities, ministries and universities.

31. He would like to know what type of measures for the advancement of women had been taken in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres and when a new action plan on women's rights and gender equality would be adopted. How would NGOs be involved in its implementation?

32. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis**, while commending the progress made by the State party in increasing the number of women in high-profile roles within the Government and national parliament, said that the representation of women in local government and on company boards remained modest. The Committee would therefore appreciate information on leadership programmes in educational institutions and on the financing of special measures aimed at paving the way for women and girls to occupy decision-making positions. Data would also be welcome on women with disabilities and minority women in leadership in areas such as the diplomatic corps, the judiciary, law enforcement, local government and security.

33. The State party was currently in the process of drafting its third national action plan on women and peace and security under Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); it might consider introducing temporary special measures at the highest levels of the security sector as part of that plan. Moreover, the Committee was concerned that the State party's stimulus

packages under the Recovery and Resilience Facility of the European Union had been prepared without adequate public consultation and did not include gender-specific reforms or quotas for women.

34. Lastly, the Government had pledged to address the structural causes of gender-based discrimination and inequality in partnership with civil society; it was therefore important for civil society organizations, including those representing women with disabilities, to be involved in the preparation of the State party's next periodic report.

35. **A representative of Slovenia** said that a new Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men was being drafted and would cover the period up to 2030. It would seek to eradicate gender inequalities in areas such as labour, family relations, health and social care and education, in addition to combating violence against women and girls and supporting international work to ensure that women worldwide were able to exercise their rights. Vulnerable and marginalized groups were a particular focus, and the resolution would therefore address the matter of older women, for whom the risk of poverty was heightened.

36. Steps were being taken to tackle gender disparities in the labour market; one measure in place was a joint programme of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology aimed at supporting women entrepreneurs. Efforts would also be made to increase men's involvement in childcare and address the lack of women in STEM careers.

37. Some progress had been made in the political sphere and, as detailed in the State party's report ([CEDAW/C/SVN/7](#), para. 55), coordinators had been appointed within ministries and local communities to promote equal opportunities for men and women. However, the response to the initiative at the local level had been disappointing. Slovenia had been informed by the European Commission of the need to include gender considerations in its recovery and resilience plans. Efforts had been made by coordinators to ensure that gender was mainstreamed into budgets and financial plans. However, there was room for improvement, and awareness-raising and information events targeted at the coordinator network had been organized as a result.

38. **A representative of Slovenia** said that women with disabilities played an active role in society, occupying roles on the management boards of various disability organizations and councils. However, no exact figures were available.

39. **A representative of Slovenia** said that women outnumbered men in the judiciary. They accounted for 82 per cent of judges and there were 45 women court presidents, compared to 21 men. With regard to prosecutors, there were roughly 150 women and 64 men.

40. **The Chair**, thanking the delegation for the information provided, said that she would appreciate clarification regarding whether the State party used temporary special measures to increase the representation of women in all of the areas that it had just mentioned.

41. **A representative of Slovenia** said that article 14 of the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act had been amended in 2019 to require the Government to ensure at least 40 per cent representation of each sex in advisory and coordinating bodies, working groups and delegations formed under the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act and the Government's Rules of Procedure.

42. **Mr. Safarov** said that he had heard no reply to his questions concerning the national action plan on women's rights. In particular, he wished to know when the plan would be adopted and whether NGOs had been involved in its preparation.

43. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the plan, known as the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, was based on the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2018–2023 and had been formulated with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including NGOs.

44. **Mr. Maljevac** (Slovenia) said that the Expert Council for Gender Equality was the main consultative body on gender issues. It had been established within the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and included representatives of

NGOs. The Resolution was expected to be adopted in the coming months. Feedback on it from NGOs had been taken into account through an interministerial coordination process.

45. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the second national action plan on women and peace and security had expired at the end of 2022 and would be renewed on the basis of an assessment of its implementation, which had not yet been completed. In 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had conducted a study on equal opportunities in the diplomatic service. The study had identified gaps in the areas of power, organizational culture, awareness, work-life balance and sexual harassment and had recommended several measures, including the application of a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and the adoption of transparent, rules-based employment procedures. The Ministry strove to empower women and girls to participate in decision-making on matters that affected their lives and was designing a strategy for the elimination of violence against them.

46. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, from 2016 to 2019, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology had implemented a special programme to promote women's entrepreneurship. In 2020 and 2021, the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology had provided support to more than 350 beginner women entrepreneurs, including in the development of business plans.

47. To mitigate the consequences of the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food had made one-off solidarity payments to 1,330 low-income farmers, including more than 1,000 women. The Ministry of Health co-financed anti-addiction programmes, with a focus on women as a particularly vulnerable group.

48. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, in February 2022, the National Assembly had adopted the Digital Inclusion Promotion Act, one of the objectives of which was to close the gender gap in digital competencies through secondary and higher education programmes.

49. **The Chair** said that the elimination of discrimination in education would be addressed under article 10 of the Convention and that she would appreciate specific information on temporary special measures.

50. **A representative of Slovenia** said that domestic legislation providing for positive discrimination offered a basis for temporary special measures.

51. **Mr. Safarov** said that he would appreciate statistics on the application of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act by courts, specifically in cases of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence. It would be interesting to know whether sanctions or penalties were imposed on media outlets for promoting gender stereotypes; whether there were legal regulations in that regard; what was done to prevent sexism, disinformation and threats online; how the Crime Victims Compensation Act was implemented and what results had been achieved; what status was accorded to the Istanbul Convention in domestic law; and what steps were taken to prevent domestic violence at the community level, particularly among Roma and migrant families. An indication of the number of shelters for victims of domestic violence and details of the financial resources allocated to them would also be welcome.

52. It would be useful to receive data on cases of sexual harassment and to know whether the Criminal Code contained provisions on forced marriage. Lastly, he wished to know whether women with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, including trans women, had access to appropriate accommodation and services.

53. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the Slovenian police force had established regular cooperation with social work centres, schools, NGOs, courts and the Office of the State Prosecutor General in its efforts to prevent violence. Officers exchanged information on investigation mechanisms and encouraged the general public to report crimes, including on behalf of others, and to have a zero-tolerance attitude to all forms of violence.

54. Particular attention was paid to Roma and migrant communities. Ukrainian refugees were informed of their rights and of the threats that they faced. Police officers were in touch with places of accommodation so that they could help those who became victims of violence or crime.

55. The police dealt with between 2,500 and 3,000 cases of domestic violence each year. Officers were trained to conduct threat assessments and to involve all stakeholders, including NGOs, in the provision of assistance to victims. In cooperation with the judiciary, restraining orders were used to protect victims.

56. **A representative of Slovenia** said that migrants were informed about the risks of violence through brochures, posters and other materials. Standard procedures were in place to prevent sexual violence against migrants. Within 24 hours of an offence being reported, a meeting was convened with representatives of safe accommodation providers and relevant NGOs, including the Association for Non-Violent Communication, and cases were promptly referred to the police. Specialized NGOs carried out weekly visits to all accommodation centres and were actively engaged in detection and prevention efforts. Victims in asylum centres received psychological and psychiatric support.

57. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, in the area of justice, the period from 2015 onwards had been the most successful for Slovenia since its independence. Victims of crime could obtain compensation in three ways: by requesting the police to issue a certificate attesting that they had reported a crime, which they could subsequently use to file a claim through the Ministry of Justice; during criminal proceedings at first instance; or, when those proceedings were lengthy or the court did not have sufficient information, by filing a civil lawsuit. They could also lodge complaints against judgments and were entitled to free legal aid despite not being a party to criminal proceedings.

58. Victims of domestic violence could claim compensation of up to €20,000 from the State, which then worked to recover funds from perpetrators. Currently, only citizens were eligible, although there were plans to remove that requirement. No statistics were available on compensation claimed through the Ministry of Justice or the courts.

59. Slovenia had ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2015 and had subsequently amended its Criminal Code to establish stalking and forced marriage as offences and introduced the model of explicit affirmative consent. Data on domestic violence disaggregated by the victim's age, sex and relationship to the perpetrator would be available in the near future. It was known that women made up a high percentage of victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and sexual assault.

60. Under the Media Act, website owners had a legal obligation to establish and enforce rules on hate speech. The Constitutional Court was not in favour of censorship and had repeatedly held that freedom of expression was one of the cornerstones of a democratic society, a stance supported by the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights.

61. **A representative of Slovenia** said that the 2021 baseline evaluation report on Slovenia of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence had concluded that the Istanbul Convention was being successfully implemented in the legal and political systems and that the Government was comprehensively addressing domestic violence and violence against women, though it needed to pay more attention to other forms of violence. In response to the recommendations contained in the report, the Statistical Office had conducted a survey on personal safety and had found that most victims of domestic violence were women; most of the physical violence suffered by men occurred outside intimate relationships; most victims of workplace sexual harassment were women aged 18 to 29 years who were at the beginning of their careers; most victims of stalking were under 30 years of age; the most common form of domestic violence against children was physical and verbal abuse by parents; and most cases of such abuse went unreported.

62. In recent years, the Government had launched campaigns to raise awareness of online violence and harassment. In 2022, the Ministry of Digital Transformation had conducted an anti-hate speech campaign featuring athletes. During the COVID-19 pandemic, a slogan had been invented to help children to report domestic violence.

63. **A representative of Slovenia** said that early and forced marriage among Roma communities had been the subject of research in 2014 that had informed awareness-raising and education for professionals involved in detecting cases and carrying out activities that addressed Roma communities. The findings had also been incorporated into the National Programme of Measures for the Roma 2017–2021 and its successor, which covered the

period 2021–2030. Steps to raise awareness of the problem had also been included in all action plans on trafficking in persons since 2017. Additional measures included an awareness-raising plan and a manual on identifying, assisting and protecting victims of early and forced marriage in Roma communities. Training had been provided to representatives of social work centres, schools, the police, the Ministry of the Interior, NGOs, Roma organizations and the health sector. Those activities had been evaluated and a plan drawn up for future action. A competition for video and other media content to raise awareness among Roma communities and professionals working with them was under way. Measures had also been taken in the health sector, including training given by a representative of a helpline for women victims of violence.

64. **Ms. Hacker** said that clarification was required as to whether, as part of the campaign to encourage neighbours, acquaintances and family members to report suspected domestic violence, the police intervened without consulting the victims; if so, that might increase their risk. Moreover, she wished to know how male perpetrators of domestic violence were rehabilitated, given that many victims did not want their partners to be removed from the home.

65. **Mr. Safarov** said that he would welcome information on whether economic and psychological violence and sexual harassment were criminalized in the Criminal Code.

66. **Mr. Maljevac** (Slovenia) said that the Government co-financed an NGO-run rehabilitation programme for perpetrators of domestic violence.

67. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, after receiving a report of suspected domestic violence, the police consulted stakeholders on the most appropriate course of action, with the final decision lying with the victim.

68. **A representative of Slovenia** said that economic abuse was addressed in legislation on many criminal offences, such as the exploitation of prostitution and trafficking in persons. Sexual harassment came under sexual violence in the Criminal Code, and there were around 24 cases per year.

69. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, in 2021, there had been around 500 male victims and 1,700 female victims of domestic violence. Victims had access to programmes at the local level. The challenges encountered in implementing the Domestic Violence Prevention Act had been noted and would be addressed during the drafting of amendments to the Act. Specifically, consideration would be given to rendering the provision of free legal aid more efficient, accelerating and increasing in-depth training for professionals dealing with violence and, as proposed by NGOs, providing training on gender stereotypes.

70. **Mr. Safarov** said that it would be useful to know what practical steps had been taken to strengthen the identification of victims of trafficking in persons. He would welcome up-to-date statistics on shelters for victims and the number of victims who had been rehabilitated and integrated into the community, particularly foreigners. He wished to know what prevention measures had been adopted to protect women and children from trafficking; whether education programmes on trafficking had been introduced in schools; when the State party would ensure that victims of all nationalities had equal rights and access to services throughout the country; and whether it would strengthen the capacity of law enforcement bodies to identify, refer and assist victims. It would also be useful to hear how the State party was preparing to implement its new action plan on trafficking in persons; how NGOs were included in those preparations; and when measures would be adopted to strengthen the systematic early identification and referral of vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees with special needs, in particular victims of trafficking.

71. **A representative of Slovenia** said that, through an NGO-led project, all persons applying for international protection, including women and unaccompanied minors, were informed of the phenomenon of trafficking in persons and the available protection mechanisms, with the assistance of interpreters if necessary. Such information was also provided via brochures, posters and leaflets, and the staff of municipalities and social work centres had received relevant training.

72. **A representative of Slovenia** said that a manual on assistance for victims of trafficking in persons had been drawn up in 2016 with the participation of NGOs and other

stakeholders, and work was under way on a new manual that would reflect recent legislative amendments and experience. The Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities provided around €45,000 per year for crisis accommodation for victims, while the Ministry of the Interior funded safe accommodation for them at a cost of around €40,000 per year. Furthermore, the European Union had committed to providing a total of €350,000 for accommodation. Shelters were run by NGOs, which were required to apply for funding, and could be accessed by victims of trafficking and victims of exploitation of prostitution, who often transpired to have suffered trafficking. Since 2010, 86 persons had been placed in crisis accommodation and 36 in safe accommodation, and NGOs had helped to develop a mechanism to find alternative accommodation for persons who did not fit the definition of a victim of trafficking.

73. Five victims who had participated in a reintegration programme since 2019 had found full-time employment, and another was currently on parental leave. Labour inspectors had been informed of signs of trafficking in persons, and 110 awareness-raising activities had taken place in schools since 2021, reaching 2,086 pupils, along with training for 121 primary school staff members and 35 secondary school staff members to enable them to identify victims of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. The current action plan on trafficking in persons had been adopted in January 2023 and included action to raise celebrants' awareness of forced marriage and systematic training for armed forces involved in international missions.

74. **A representative of Slovenia**, speaking via video link, said that, in partnership with the European Migration Network, training on the identification of victims of trafficking had been provided for professionals working with vulnerable migrants, such as social workers and staff of the Ministry of the Interior. Additionally, one person had completed a training of trainers course, and another was in the process of doing so.

75. **A representative of Slovenia** said that victims of trafficking in persons could access compensation through three channels. The State party planned to eliminate the requirement for European Union citizenship to receive compensation, simplify the application process and make the provision of compensation contingent on the victim's age, rather than the date of the offence.

Articles 7–9

76. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that, while the State party had made commendable progress in women's political representation, she wondered whether it would increase the quota for women on lists for elections to the National Assembly. She would like to know how the participation of women, including women from minority groups, in politics at the local level would be increased, including mechanisms to improve their representation among Roma councillors and on the National Council. Information would be welcome on funding for the next cycle of the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. With regard to hate speech, she would welcome details of the council that would be set up to address the issue, any plans to introduce a code of conduct for members of the National Assembly and sanctions for its violation, and specific measures to outlaw hate speech online and in the media.

77. It would be helpful to receive information on the projects on equal opportunities in diplomacy that had taken place in 2009 and 2020, including whether they were continuing and, if so, whether they would increase the number of women in leadership roles in the diplomatic service. Given that women occupied few senior management positions in companies, she wondered whether the requirement for large and medium companies to disclose gender ratios in leadership positions was making a tangible difference. She would welcome updated figures on gender balance in companies participating in the initiative that set voluntary gender diversity targets in management and supervisory bodies and what other incentives existed to increase women's participation, particularly in public companies.

78. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis** said that she would welcome information on the specific steps planned by the State party towards ratifying the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Given the existential challenge posed to refugee and migrant worker women by the war in Ukraine, the State party should ratify the International Convention on the

Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as well as removing the structural impediments that hindered the rights of migrant and refugee women.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.