



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women  
Fifty-sixth session**

**Summary record of the 1159th meeting\***

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 1 October 2013, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Ameline

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*Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Republic of Moldova*

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\* No summary record was issued for the 1158th meeting.

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

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

*Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Republic of Moldova  
(CEDAW/C/MDA/4-5; CEDAW/C/MDA/Q/4-5 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of the Republic of Moldova took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) introduced the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Republic of Moldova (CEDAW/C/MDA/4-5) prepared with the assistance of central and local gender units. Highlighting progress made since consideration of the previous periodic report, he said that women's participation in public life had increased almost fivefold: there were now 4 women in the Cabinet, 19 in parliament and 27 female ambassadors. To encourage the greater participation of women in politics, a 40 per cent quota had been established for women in political parties and all decision-making posts in public administration.
3. The law on ensuring equality of 2012 had increased the prohibited grounds for discrimination. It allowed for legal action to be taken in cases of discrimination, including by trade unions and voluntary associations and for the payment of compensation. It also provided for disciplinary, administrative and criminal sanctions. As a result of the law on equality, amendments relating to discrimination and equality had been made to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Code governing lesser offences, and article 24 of the law on equal opportunities of 2006 had become applicable.
4. Training seminars had been organized for gender units in ministries and other State bodies on incorporating the gender perspective in State policy as well as for staff concerned from local administrations. With the support of UN-Women, under its programme for the economic empowerment of women, offices providing information and services for women had been opened at national and regional levels that had received State funding as of 2012. The national action plan to ensure equality for 2010–2105, adopted in 2013, would also be funded by the State budget.
5. To ensure gender-sensitive budgeting, gender audits had been conducted in the National Employment Agency and the Central Electoral Commission in 2012 and a report had been submitted to the Commission recently. Amendments had been made and proposed to legislation on the police and armed forces so as to eliminate discrimination against female personnel, inter alia, by granting them paid maternity and childcare leave.
6. Since the Republic of Moldova was a source country for human trafficking, and, in compliance with its obligations under relevant international instruments, a national referral system for victims and potential victims of human trafficking had been approved by parliament. A new law to combat domestic violence had entailed amendments to the Criminal Code in 2010 ensuring adequate protection for victims and the prosecution of perpetrators. The network of centres providing assistance to victims had been expanded and specialist staff had received training. In 2013 the process of harmonizing national and European legislation on domestic violence had begun.
7. However, despite the progress made much work remained to be done. Matters to be addressed as a priority were: the vulnerability of women, particularly because of poverty; employment issues such as work-life balance and differences in wages and pensions; negative stereotyping; the system for handling complaints of domestic violence and related cases before the European Court of Human Rights.

8. The Government had the support of many international organizations and associations in its efforts to implement gender policies, including UN-Women, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe. It would take into account the recommendations of the Committee and looked forward to the dialogue with it.

*Articles 1 to 6*

9. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said that despite progress made by the State party including the ratification of the Optional Protocol, the establishment of the principle of equality in the Constitution and legislative reform, major problems remained, in particular persistent violence against women. Referring to the process of harmonizing national legislation with the law on ensuring equality and related international standards, she asked what priorities had been established, to what extent civil society was involved and whether all forms of discrimination would be taken into account. In view of the number of cases brought before the European Court of Human Rights against the State party in recent years involving breaches of fundamental human rights, she asked how the Government intended to bring national legislation into line with international instruments so as to ensure observance of such rights. Lastly, she drew attention to the shortcomings of existing mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova for ensuring compliance with its international obligations and asked what steps would be taken to remedy the situation.

10. **Ms. Leinarte** said that the Committee was obliged to monitor implementation of the Convention in all parts of the State party, yet the regions of Gagauzia and Transnistria were not represented on the delegation or mentioned in the report. She expressed the hope that during the dialogue the delegation would provide information on the situation of women in those regions on matters of concern to the Committee, such as domestic violence, trafficking and women's poverty. In that connection, she referred to the conclusions of the report of the United Nations Senior Expert on Human Rights in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg, which she understood had been endorsed by the Government.

11. **Ms. Al-Jehani** said that reports had been received of widespread discrimination against older women and women with disabilities in access to health, employment and housing. Since the Constitution did not recognize age and disability as grounds for discrimination, she welcomed the fact that the law on ensuring equality of 2012 did. She would be interested to know how the law was expected to bridge the gap between the real situation and formal equality, what measures were being taken to that end, and whether there was a rights-based approach to disability and ageing in the State party.

12. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that Roma women seemed to be particularly vulnerable to discrimination, as recognized in the national action plan for Roma people. However, although data available showed that Roma women fare far worse than Roma men, particularly in the field of education, such matters were not addressed in the action plan. Furthermore, according to alternative sources the Roma population had de facto autonomous jurisdiction in the area of family law, which made it difficult for Roma women to divorce. Were the authorities aware of the situation and were any steps being taken to remedy it? Apparently negative attitudes towards lesbian, bisexual and transgender women prevailed in the Republic of Moldova. She asked whether homosexuality was still a criminal offence and about recent amendments to legislation prohibiting the dissemination of information on conduct that was not in keeping with the Family Code and Constitution. Had the Government considered the negative effects of such legislation and the possibility of it being repealed?

13. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that it was one thing to ratify an international instrument and another to ensure its implementation; that required not only legislation but also appropriate mechanisms, resources and training. The law on ensuring equality had called for amendments to around 20 other pieces of legislation, which had raised various compatibility and cooperation issues at State and other levels. Problems with certain amendments still remained. However, the process launched by the new law had brought good results, such as training on the gender perspective for specialists in the ministries and agencies concerned who were examining aspects of discrimination in different sectors, for example employment. One problem area on which discussions were under way was paid childcare leave: women in the Republic of Moldova were currently entitled to three years' leave on 30 per cent of their salary and six years' unpaid leave. Other problem areas included social security contributions, for which a more comprehensive and equitable scheme was required, and ensuring that women in the police and armed forces enjoyed the same rights as other working women.

14. No data on the region of Transnistria had been included in the report or in his statement because the Republic of Moldova had entered a reservation with regard to the territory of Transnistria upon ratification of the Convention; however, the instrument was applicable in the region of Gagauzia. The fact that there was no representative of Gagauzia on the delegation made little difference since the region was represented on all State bodies and had provided input to the report. He led a working group on social policy and humanitarian assistance in Transnistria that had dealt successfully with various issues affecting women in the region, such as domestic violence, pension rights, internal migration and family reunification.

15. There was no discrimination on ethnic grounds in the Republic of Moldova. According to the 2004 census there were around 20,000 Roma, many having declared themselves as belonging to other ethnic minorities (Russians, Ukrainians). A further census was planned for 2014. There was a national action plan to ensure equality for the Roma and amendments had recently been made to legislation relating to the Roma and local government. With the assistance of UNDP, a study of towns and villages with significant Roma populations had been conducted and community focal points had been established to liaise with the Roma community on education, health and other matters of concern. Currently only a small percentage of those posts was funded by the State budget; the remaining ones would be funded by the State budget in the near future and training would be provided by State agents.

16. Statistics were generally disaggregated by age and gender and not by ethnic minority. However, according to information available, 10 per cent of Roma seeking employment had found jobs and others eligible for unemployment and training benefits had received them. A 15 per cent quota of grants for higher education had been set for Roma students. In 2012, more than 13 million euros had been earmarked for housing projects for vulnerable groups, including the Roma, and the construction of 700 housing units was planned in selected areas.

17. Concerning discrimination against older women and women with disabilities, the Republic of Moldova had ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and had adopted a strategy on social inclusion. More recently a law on social inclusion had been passed under which people were no longer classified according to categories of disability. There were currently more than 180,000 disabled persons in the Republic, including children; 49 per cent of the adults were women. Those disabled persons were entitled to social protection and other allowances. Criteria were being established to assess their suitability for employment and funding would be allocated as of 2014 for specialized training and rehabilitation centres. Furthermore, measures had been introduced concerning the organization and delivery of various social services for the disabled, such as

sheltered housing and personal assistants. Funds had been allocated at national and local levels for the provision of personal assistants to persons with serious disabilities who were currently cared for by their relatives and more funds would be allocated the following year.

18. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that a study conducted in cooperation with UN-Women showed that more than 80 per cent of mothers of children with serious disabilities were unable to work because they were the sole carers of their children. The personal assistants' service had been introduced in order to allow such women to work and be eligible for a pension.

19. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that the Government had devised a programme on population and demographic security, inter alia, to ensure active ageing for men and women. Regrettably there were wage differences between men and women who tended to work in different sectors of the economy and that affected their pension rights. Steps were therefore being taken to prevent discrimination, to ensure that workloads were commensurate with age and to supplement the income of older persons in need.

20. **Ms. Calugaru** (Republic of Moldova) said that homosexuality had been decriminalized in 1996. She pointed out that all new legislative texts were drafted in cooperation with civil society and subject to public consultations. The Ministry of Internal Affairs had issued guidelines on the correct application of amended article 90/1 of the Code governing lesser offences. Moreover, the Centre for Human Rights, which was the national human rights institution, had sent a letter to parliament requesting a re-examination of the article and a review of the legislative process. The provisions of the law on ensuring equality were in line with international standards and the Constitution and had been taken into account in the national human rights action plan, in keeping with recommendations by the universal periodic review, the Council of Europe and the European Union.

21. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that 10,000 Roma children aged 7 to 16 were enrolled in school and attendance had improved markedly, with two-thirds fewer absentees in the first half of 2013 than in late 2012. Since September 2013, all pupils received grants to cover the cost of school supplies. The Ministry of Education ran two boarding schools for children with difficulties; however, a process was under way at the boys' facility, and would soon begin at the girls' institution, to integrate children into mainstream schools.

22. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said her understanding was that the Republic of Moldova had ratified the Convention without reservations.

23. **Ms. Leinarte** asked whether any cases of discrimination against women had been brought before the courts.

24. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that the initiative of community focal points was promising but wished to know whether women would be allowed to play that role, whether a gender perspective would be part of the training the focal points received and whether they would also engage with the de facto courts in Roma communities. She asked the delegation to confirm whether homosexuality, though decriminalized, was still considered a perversion. Referring to alarming reports that women with mental disabilities or disorders living in institutions were being sexually abused by personnel, she asked what preventive and punitive measures the Government planned to take and added that the committal process itself violated the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

25. **Ms. Acar** expressed concern that policies towards persons with disabilities focused excessively on their disability rather than their humanity and that little seemed to be done to empower them. She asked whether there had been any court cases of discrimination on the grounds of disability or age. Pointing out that the State party had not provided gender-

disaggregated data for women over 50, she suggested that the next census would be the opportunity to fill that gap with a view to designing more targeted policies.

26. **Ms. Calugaru** (Republic of Moldova) said that the Republic of Moldova had ratified all international human rights instruments with a reservation regarding their application in the region of Transnistria. Nevertheless, inhabitants of that region were citizens of the Republic of Moldova and the Government was very grateful to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for having appointed a senior expert to draft a report on the situation of human rights in the region. The Government was looking into how to apply the recommendations contained in that report.

27. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that most of the community focal points would be women, although all applicants would be considered, provided that they were Roma. Women were divided, for statistical purposes, into five-year age brackets up to age 90.

28. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that no data were kept on discrimination cases, but that three cases of discrimination in employment on the grounds of ethnicity or disability had been registered on the website of the Anti-Discrimination Council. Given that the law on ensuring equality had only recently been adopted, the relevant actors still needed to be trained on how to identify and assist victims of gender discrimination.

29. **Mr. Podarilov** (Republic of Moldova) said that until 2003, homosexuality had been considered a form of depravity, but that was no longer the case and homosexual acts were only an offence if intercourse was coerced. The relevant Government entities had made considerable efforts to step up their monitoring of human trafficking, thereby vastly improving their ability to identify victims.

30. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, expressed the hope that the Government would forge stronger ties with the authorities of Transnistria and not solely with the local NGOs.

31. **Ms. Al-Jehani** commended the State party for its continued efforts to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for gender equality and its noteworthy actions to improve gender-disaggregated statistics. She asked the delegation to clarify the role of the national committee responsible for gender equality and the division responsible for policies on gender equality and the prevention of violence at the Ministry of Labour. She also asked how they coordinated their efforts, how they communicated with each other, what authority they had and whether they had the financial and human resources needed to fulfil their mandates. She enquired about the role of the gender focal points and about how their effectiveness was assessed. She asked whether the gender coordinating council had already been established and, if so, what results it had achieved. She requested an update on amendments to the legal framework of the national machinery for the advancement of women; on the key outcomes of the national strategy for gender equality and its associated action plan as well as any implementation challenges encountered; and on the roll-out of the national programme on gender equality (2010–2015). Lastly, she wished to know how the national human rights institution contributed to the advancement of women and whether it complied with the Paris Principles.

32. **Ms. Schulz** commended the State party on its openness regarding the difficulties women faced. However, she expressed concern that there was a profound misunderstanding of the concept of temporary special measures and that the Government was not making adequate use of them to protect women's rights. For example, the measures described in paragraphs 32 to 42 of the report were permanent rather than temporary. She regretted that quotas set for women in decision-making positions were still not enforced. She asked whether the Government intended to introduce real temporary special measures in areas where it had identified the biggest shortfalls, such as education, health and social

protection; it had a list of urgent actions to overcome discrimination against specific groups of women; it had set aside a specific budget and had provided for an ex ante evaluation of such measures.

33. **Ms. Leinarte**, pointing out that providing excessively long maternity leave could lead to women falling into poverty later in life, asked how the Government was encouraging men to share parental leave with their wives and whether women were warned of the long-term financial implications of staying home for extended periods.

34. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari**, referring to a statement of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief regarding the far-reaching influence of the Orthodox Church in the State party, enquired about government plans to ensure that parents had real choices regarding the religious education of their children, to examine the messages being conveyed through religious instruction and to combat gender stereotyping.

35. **Ms. Al-Jehani** asked what measures were in place to dissuade the media from portraying women in a sexist manner. Drawing the delegation's attention to the Committee's general recommendation No. 27 on older women and protection of their human rights, she asked whether it had been used to raise awareness, train professionals and reverse preconceptions. She also wished to know what measures were planned to eliminate discrimination against older women and women with disabilities.

36. **Ms. Neubauer** expressed concern about the considerable gap between the law and practice, especially with regard to certain forms of violence, such as rape, and specific groups of women who remained on the margins of protective measures. She asked what steps had been taken to review investigative guidelines, in the light of the finding of the European Court of Human Rights that not enough prosecutions were being made for rape. She also asked whether there were plans to introduce a system of emergency protection orders for women victims of domestic violence, to ensure that applications were not rejected simply because the accused denied the charges and to improve the enforcement of protection orders. What steps were taken to investigate allegations of abuse and forced abortions in psychiatric hospitals, protect institutionalized women and prohibit forced committal?

37. Since victims of violence were more vulnerable to trafficking, she asked whether the national referral system for protection and assistance to victims and potential victims of human trafficking would be extended to women victims of violence and children without parents or in alternative care. Referring to the rejection by parliament of the bill prohibiting the purchase of sexual services, she asked why the bill had been rejected and what other measures were in place, or being considered, to address the demand side of sexual exploitation. She asked whether any female victims of trafficking had benefited from the vocational training and career counselling provided by the National Employment Agency. She requested a progress report on the activities of the working group responsible for bringing national legislation into line with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and asked whether the State party intended to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

38. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that the national committee responsible for gender equality had been holding quarterly meetings since 2009. Its main objectives were to promote equality, coordinate the activities of relevant bodies and improve the socioeconomic status of all women. Under the law, all ministries and departments, including at the local level, had to have a gender unit responsible for promoting and implementing the principle of gender equality. Quotas to support female entrepreneurship were being actively debated. The national programme on gender equality was evaluated annually, as were the activities of all actors involved in its implementation. In addition, the

Republic of Moldova had signed the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and set up a board, which had already held several meetings, to monitor observance of the Declaration's five guiding principles.

39. **Ms. Calugaru** (Republic of Moldova) said that the Centre for Human Rights had been given B status and a reform was under way to bring it into full compliance with the Paris Principles.

40. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that the length of maternity leave should be reviewed. Current legislation provided that either parent could take the leave, but it was a right rather than an obligation; thus, it had been agreed in principle to amend the Labour Code to introduce an obligation for fathers to take at least two weeks paternity leave.

41. There was a requirement that 5 per cent of the workforce should be made up of persons with disabilities and specialists in the local branches of the National Employment Agency ensured that legislation on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities was being implemented and that workplaces were adapted to their needs.

42. Efforts to prevent women from falling into poverty later in life included a reform of the social security system, under which the retirement age had been raised to 57 for women and 62 for men. Plans to increase the minimum number of years required to qualify for the State pension to 35 for both sexes had been put on hold because a court ruling deemed it to be unconstitutional in the case of women, as it was unlikely that they could meet the requirement if their time in education, maternity leave and retirement age were taken into account. Both sexes could continue working beyond the retirement age without losing their rights and pensions.

43. Secondary education students could choose to go to a technical/vocational school or a general school. Current figures showed that only 31 per cent of students in technical/vocational schools were female, as they tended to offer traditional male subjects, against a 55 per cent female student population in middle and high schools and 56 per cent in higher education. Moreover, women tended to dominate certain professions such as teaching and social work. Future efforts would therefore be focused on ensuring that educational institutions gave young people better guidance in choosing their studies and careers to address the problem of stereotyping.

44. **Ms. Calugaru** (Republic of Moldova) said that religious education was optional in schools and was only provided at the request of parents. The education system was being reformed, the emphasis being on developing a child-centred curriculum that responded to children's developmental needs.

45. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that migration had given rise to a situation where thousands of children and older people had been left vulnerable when parents and adult children went to work abroad. Legislation provided protection and alternative care for such children and provision was also made to care for abandoned parents.

46. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that the State was committed to combating stereotypes and was aware that the media had enormous potential to bring about social change. A law had been passed prohibiting the use by advertising agencies of materials that were degrading, sexist, or advocated violence and there was a code for television and radio espousing gender equality and the need to uphold a positive image of women and eliminate stereotypes from the media.

47. **Mr. Podarilov** (Republic of Moldova) said that national legislation had been brought into line with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, including making the solicitation of children for sexual purposes, child pornography and child prostitution criminal offences.



Furthermore, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had set up a centre to combat Internet crime, including offences covered by that Convention.

48. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that the Government had adopted a new provision on abortion and increased the period for legal abortions to 22 weeks of gestation. Abortions could only be carried out in compliance with legislation and the woman concerned must be fully informed and consenting. Pregnant women with disabilities had to be made as fully aware as possible of the procedure and its consequences.

49. **Ms. Leinarte** enquired about the retirement age for women and whether it was mandatory. She requested information on the financial and human resources allocated to the national machinery for the advancement of women and asked whether the community focal points had separate budget lines.

50. **Ms. Neubauer** expressed regret that no response had been given to her questions, including on violence against women and rape; the introduction of a system of emergency protection orders for women victims of domestic violence; steps taken to investigate allegations of abuse and forced abortions in psychiatric hospitals; extending the national referral system for protection and assistance to victims and potential victims of human trafficking to women victims of violence and children left behind in the country without parents; why the bill prohibiting the purchase of sexual services had been rejected by parliament and what measures were in place to address the demand side of sexual exploitation.

51. **Ms. Schulz** reiterated her question on whether there were plans to introduce temporary special measures. If so, in which areas would they be applied, within what time frame and would an ex ante evaluation of such measures be conducted?

52. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) said that the retirement age of 57 for women and 62 for men was mandatory. Civil servants had been allowed to retire five years earlier, but legislation had been adopted in 2011 to equalize the retirement age for all within 10 years. The gender units in each ministry and local and regional executive committees did not have separate budget lines.

53. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that the intention had been to allocate an additional 30 per cent of budget funds to the community focal points, but the financial situation made it impossible for the foreseeable future. A multidisciplinary commission was looking into the cases of sexual violence in psychiatric institutions, some of which had been referred to the Public Prosecutor's Office. Guidance for specialists on children's rights and other specialists had been issued to help those assisting children left behind in the country without parents.

54. Domestic violence was a difficult area because not all courts could issue protection orders within the desired time frame. However, a new law had been drafted to provide for a new type of emergency protection order that could be granted by the police in domestic violence cases. Steps were being taken to ratify the European Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence by 2015. Parliament had adopted a national strategy to support victims of trafficking and prevent the trafficking of potential victims.

55. There were plans to introduce temporary special measures, including specific quotas, to promote women in politics, the diplomatic service and business. An evaluation of those measures had not been carried out, but national experts agreed that further measures should be adopted.

56. **Mr. Podarilov** (Republic of Moldova) said that women victims of trafficking were assisted by law enforcement officials, who ensured that they received the best levels of physical, psychological, social, medical and legal support by referring them to NGOs and

other relevant bodies. Almost all victims of sexual exploitation were directed to the national referral system and were entitled to psychological support.

57. **Mr. Turcanu** (Republic of Moldova), acknowledging that there had been cases of violence against patients in psychiatric institutions, said that psychiatric services were undergoing reform. The number of psychiatric hospitals had already been reduced to three and the number of beds by half.

58. **Mr. Maxian** (Republic of Moldova) said that there was no legal provision for special measures in cases of violence against women because both the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Criminal Code could be applied. Besides, the new police emergency protection order was in place. The problem was not that the protection order system was ineffective, but that the implementing legislation had not set forth how it should be applied in certain circumstances. A standard approach had therefore been developed in 2012 to be used by police officers, social workers, doctors and lawyers, including sanctions to be levied in the event of a violation of the protection order.

*Articles 7 to 9*

59. **Ms. Haidar** expressed concern that, despite efforts to increase women's participation in politics, the Republic of Moldova had actually fallen in related world rankings. What factors had contributed to that, why had the process to introduce a quota of 30 per cent failed and what remedial measures had been implemented? She wondered why the amendment to legislation for public funding to encourage political parties to attract more women had stalled. She asked what steps were being taken to ensure that more women reached key public service positions and to upgrade women's skills and training.

60. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, asked what measures were being taken to prepare for the run-up to the elections.

61. **Mr. Sainciuc** (Republic of Moldova) agreed that having more women in decision-making positions would improve the overall situation of women; they certainly had the ability, education and energy to reach the top. There was a need to prepare for the upcoming elections and more support should be given to women wishing to enter politics. One special measure that could bring real equality was to ensure that the names of female candidates appeared at the top of electoral lists.

62. **Ms. Pascal** (Republic of Moldova) said that proposals had been put forward to amend legislation to raise the minimum quota for women in decision-making posts in public and political spheres from 30 to 40 per cent and to have two female candidates for every five candidates on electoral lists. If those two proposals received support, there were plans for a third proposal on parliamentary regulations. A series of seminars was being run to prepare women for entry into the electoral process and political life, with assistance from NGOs and international and local bodies.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*