



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**  
**Seventy-second session**

**Summary record of the 1674th meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 27 February 2019, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Gbedemah

**Contents**

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

*Seventh periodic report of Angola (continued)*

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*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

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

*Seventh periodic report of Angola (CEDAW/C/AGO/7; CEDAW/C/AGO/Q/7 and CEDAW/C/AGO/Q/7/Add.1) (continued)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Angola took places at the Committee table.*

*Articles 7 to 9 (continued)*

2. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that the number of civil society organizations was growing. The law regulating their activities had changed and they were protected in a number of ways, for example: the Constitution provided for freedom of association; some had a special status entitling them to subsidies, while others benefited from tax exemptions. In addition, the Government had presented its State party report (CEDAW/C/AGO/7) to a number of human rights organizations the previous week. Some of the organizations' recommendations had helped improve the delegation's presentation before the Committee. A recent meeting between the President and religious leaders from organizations that had previously been considered hostile to the Government's initiatives marked a significant step forward in relations between the State and civil society.

3. Past armed conflict and cultural issues had meant that a large number of Angolan adults and children did not have birth certificates. The Government had therefore launched a birth registration drive in recent years. Birth certificates and identity cards were issued free of charge and unnecessary bureaucracy had been eliminated. Awareness campaigns on the importance of birth registration targeted fathers. Midwives had been trained to register babies born at home. In addition, there had also been efforts to register the births of the children of refugees arriving from the Democratic Republic of the Congo who had been born in refugee camps in the country.

4. **Ms. Chalal** said that she would be interested to hear more about the operations and objectives of the women's group in the National Assembly.

5. **Ms. Eghobamien-Mshelia**, noting that no alternative reports had been submitted with the State's report, said that, under the Convention, civil society must be able to interact freely and directly with the Committee, without fear of reprisal.

6. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that her delegation was aware of three submissions of reports by one civil society organization, although it was unclear why more organizations had not submitted others. The parliamentary caucus worked to increase the budget allocated to women's empowerment and aimed to further women's political participation by running workshops and events in the parliament.

7. **Ms. Izata** (Angola) said that women did hold positions of responsibility at the Ministry of Foreign Relations: a number of ambassadors were women, while others held high-ranking positions representing Angola abroad.

*Articles 10 to 14*

8. **Ms. Ameline**, referring to article 10, said that she wondered how the Government could further assist schools, as they still lacked resources, particularly in rural areas. She wished to know more about the status of the national education plan. In addition, she wished to know whether the Government had indicators on the number of girls studying technology, mathematics, and science. Lastly, she wished to find out whether girls had as much opportunity as boys to study abroad.

9. **Mr. Homero** (Angola) said that the Government aimed to ensure universal access to education, despite financial constraints and a lack of infrastructure. For that reason, 5,000 primary schools and a number of secondary schools were under construction. In higher education, 48 per cent of female students were enrolled in technical areas and scholarships were available to women without discrimination. The curriculum was under review and

improvements would be made to teacher training, with a view to enhancing the quality of education. Although the education budget had been cut, in 2017, it was increased despite the financial crisis. In addition, with support from the Government, civil society and the church, 672,000 adults were now literate.

10. **Ms. Viegas** (Angola) said that a training and management programme, implemented in collaboration with a number of European and other African countries, had contributed towards ensuring high-quality education. A study-abroad programme that gave women priority over men sent 300 graduates to some of the world's best universities.

11. **Ms. Ameline** said that, with a view to promoting girls' education, she would like to suggest that distance learning should be introduced, particularly to benefit girls in rural areas, and that temporary special measures should be applied.

12. **The Chair**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, agreed that temporary special measures should be introduced, especially to encourage girls to study science, technology and maths.

13. **Ms. Ameline** said that the Government's moves to develop and diversify the economy would enable women to enter certain areas of employment, such as agriculture and new technologies, for the first time. She wondered, however, what social protection was afforded to informal workers, many of whom were women, and whether effective measures enabled them to take up formal employment. She wondered whether, for example, under the national development plan (2018–2022), the Government could work with international organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), or if the Government could introduce special temporary measures. Equally, she urged the State party to introduce legislation on equal employment rights, with a view to combating stereotypes in the workplace and opening up women's opportunities to take up positions of greater responsibility. Lastly, she wondered whether there was any cooperation between the Government and large companies in Angola to help vulnerable women in particular to gain secure employment.

14. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola) said that Presidential Decree No. 155/16 of 9 August provided for the protection of domestic workers and brought domestic work, which was mainly carried out by women, into the formal economy. The Government provided vocational training to women with a low level of education to help them to find employment. Measures were being taken to extend social protection schemes to women working in the informal economy and enhance their awareness of their rights. Men and women had equal rights under labour law and were entitled to earn the same salaries for the same work. The Government had established partnerships with foreign companies to ensure that State representatives were involved in discussions on gender held in the private sector.

15. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that the Government had recently made a commitment to strengthening the monitoring of girls' school attendance. In that regard, the Ministry of Education had established a remedial education programme for children who had been unable to attend school. As a result of the measures taken, the number of children not attending school had fallen, allowing the Government to shift its focus to the quality of education and related issues such as teacher training. In 2018, in order to maintain and enhance educational standards, measures had been taken to ensure that the education sector was able to continue recruiting staff. Owing to the financial constraints under which the Government was operating, all other sectors, except for health, had been prevented from doing so.

16. Under labour law, women employees enjoyed greater protection against unemployment than their male counterparts. Women employed in all sectors were entitled to take three months' paid maternity leave and, in certain cases, could have that leave extended by an additional month. When they had returned from maternity leave, breastfeeding employees were entitled to work one hour less per day for 18 months after the birth of their child. The unemployment rate was relatively high and a significant proportion of the population engaged in precarious work. In order to address that situation, steps were being taken to bring small businesses into the formal economy and to regularize the employment of domestic workers, gardeners and drivers, among other professions. Women selling goods in the informal sector were exempt from tax and granted licences to sell their goods. In order to boost their earning potential, women entrepreneurs were given access to training programmes and microcredit schemes funded by the State and the private sector.

17. **Ms. Caposso Fernandes** (Angola), speaking as a lawyer and the president of a non-profit legal association, said that internships were made available to enhance women's employment prospects and prepare them to enter the workforce. In recent years, the number of qualified women lawyers had risen significantly. As a result, job opportunities for women were expected to increase as women who started law practices were quite likely to employ other women. During the celebrations held to mark International Women's Day, emphasis had been placed on promoting women's participation in the exact sciences and highlighting the efforts made by women working in those fields to transmit their knowledge, including through the higher education system. As a result of those efforts, women and girls were becoming increasingly interested in pursuing a career in the exact sciences.

18. **Ms. Ameline**, noting that the State party report referred to inspections carried out by labour inspection bodies, said that the Committee would welcome information on the number of prosecutions that had been brought as a result of the inspections and the outcome of those prosecutions, including any sanctions imposed on persons found to have violated women's labour rights. In its efforts to bring more women workers into the formal sector, the State party might consider stepping up its dialogue with ILO with a view to improving its employment policies. In the light of the Government's efforts to diversify the economy, it was essential to enhance employment opportunities for young women.

19. **Ms. Acosta Vargas** said that it would be interesting to learn whether the State party's relatively high maternal mortality rate included figures for women who had died at home rather than in hospital. She asked whether increased efforts were being made to monitor pregnancies and whether the number of home births was continuing to decrease. The Committee wished to know how many maternal deaths were linked to unsafe abortions and whether genuine efforts were being made to audit the causes of maternal deaths, in line with Presidential Decree No. 52/12. She wondered whether any assessments had been conducted of the integrated mother and child health-care package and what specific measures had been taken to accelerate the decline in the maternal mortality rate.

20. The Committee would welcome information on the ways in which women were affected by endemic diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS and any measures taken to expand the treatment of obstetric fistula. Noting that Angola had a relatively high fertility rate, particularly in rural areas, she asked whether the national plan on sexual and reproductive health was effective and whether steps had been taken to launch the national strategy for the prevention and fight against teenage marriages and pregnancies for the period 2018–2022. The Committee would appreciate information on the Government's policy on contraception and any measures taken to increase the availability of modern methods of contraception. It would be interesting to know how many girls under the age of 15 years became pregnant every year, how many abortions took place every year and whether the Government would consider expanding the grounds on which abortion was permitted. She wondered what proportion of persons living with HIV/AIDS were women, whether up-to-date figures on such persons were available and what measures were being taken to ensure that women knew their HIV status.

21. **Mr. de Carvalho** (Angola) said that the proportion of the State budget allocated to health care had risen by over 2 per cent between 2018 and 2019 and would subsequently be increased further. A sexual health programme was currently under way and an integrated strategy on adolescent health, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Ministry of Health and the United States Agency for International Development, among other organizations, had been launched to promote young persons' health and warn them of the dangers of teenage pregnancy. The Government and the World Bank had recently concluded an agreement on strengthening the national health system with a view to improving the performance of over 300 health units in over 21 municipalities and enhancing the care provided to adolescent girls.

22. The HIV/AIDS rate, which stood at around 2 per cent, was among the lowest in the States members of the Southern African Development Community. In order to combat HIV/AIDS, the Government had launched a national plan on accelerating the reduction in mother-to-child transmission of the virus. The plan, which was aimed at halving the transmission rate by 2022, was aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the 90-90-90 target under the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, on diagnosing and

treating HIV/AIDS. In 2018, the First Lady of Angola had launched a programme aimed at eliminating HIV/AIDS in children by 2030.

23. As a result of government initiatives, the teenage pregnancy rate had fallen significantly between 2014 and 2018. In order to address the shortfall in the number of doctors, the Ministries of Health and Education had held a public competition for the recruitment of over 3,000 doctors and cooperation agreements had been established with other countries in the region. In view of the fact that malaria affected a greater proportion of the population than any other disease, Angola had joined the Roll Back Malaria Partnership and had taken steps to distribute free insecticide-treated mosquito nets, hold insecticide spraying campaigns and establish agreements on fighting large-scale epidemics with neighbouring countries. As part of its efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, the Government distributed free contraceptives and antiretroviral drugs and had established the National HIV and AIDS Institute. A State-run programme on HIV/AIDS encouraged young persons to adopt good practices, including the use of contraception. Awareness of HIV/AIDS was also raised through television discussions, workshops and information campaigns.

24. **Mr. Bambi** (Angola) said that an earlier draft of the Criminal Code had contained provisions under which women could opt to have an abortion within a certain specified time period. Subsequently, however, the Code had been amended to criminalize abortion in order to protect the right to life of the unborn child. Under the newly adopted Criminal Code, persons performing or undergoing an abortion were punishable by a custodial sentence unless it was the only way of preventing the woman's death or avoiding serious harm to her physical or mental integrity, the fetus was medically certified to be non-viable, or the pregnancy resulted from a rape and the termination took place during the first 16 weeks of pregnancy.

25. **Mr. de Carvalho** (Angola) said that the Ministry of Health had established an integrated health-care package that included family planning, antenatal visits, vaccinations, assistance during childbirth and postnatal medical visits. In 2010, the Government had launched a national campaign to accelerate the reduction of the maternal and infant mortality rates.

26. **Ms. Song**, noting that the Government had established microcredit schemes specifically aimed at women, said that she wished to know what criteria women needed to fulfil in order to obtain such credit, how many women had been granted credit through the schemes and what impact the schemes had had on women's empowerment and advancement. Given that social protection was provided for working mothers and their children under Act No. 7/04, the Social Protection Act, she asked whether similar benefits were made available to unemployed women and women working in the informal sector. Were older women, and women with disabilities, entitled to any form of social protection?

27. The Committee would welcome information on any measures taken to encourage girls and women to participate in sports. She wondered what public facilities had been established to enable women to socialize with others and engage in physical activities and whether regular cultural events were organized in order to foster solidarity among women, including rural women. It would be interesting to learn what priorities had been established in the National Programme of Support for Rural Women, whether the impact of that programme had been assessed and, if so, what its main achievements had been. Given that the programme had been adopted in 2012, she wished to know whether the Government would consider developing a new programme along similar lines.

28. She asked whether women, and women's organizations, had been consulted during the formulation of the National Strategy for Combating Poverty and what impact the strategy had had on reducing poverty among women. Given that a large number of women worked in the agricultural sector, she would be interested to learn why relatively few women belonged to agricultural cooperatives. She asked how many such cooperatives were led by women, what assistance the Government gave cooperatives to enable them to achieve their goals and whether cooperatives played a role in combating violence against women and child marriage and promoting women's rights in general. It would be interesting to know what was being done to support the advancement of rural women by increasing their awareness of women's rights, gender equality policies and innovative farming methods.

29. She wished to know what measures had been adopted to promote women's equality with respect to land rights. Lastly, she would be grateful if the delegation could respond to reports that women in refugee settlements, including in the settlement in Lóvua, were subjected to sexual exploitation and indicate what measures had been adopted to combat sexual violence and exploitation in refugee settlements.

30. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola) said that the target set under the 2018 Integrated Plan for Local Development and Combating Poverty was to reduce the poverty rate from 36 per cent to 25 per cent by 2022. In that regard, the Government had already worked with thousands of families and had helped hundreds of individuals to develop income-generating activities. Training courses had been conducted to empower women in rural areas. The difference in the numbers of female members of associations and cooperatives could be attributed to the specific characteristics of each of those forms of incorporation. Women were nevertheless represented in both associations and cooperatives at the leadership level. Efforts had been made to raise awareness of the Convention through lectures and theatrical productions, including in local languages.

31. **Ms. Lunda** (Angola) said that, in order to strengthen the protection of refugees, the Government had reviewed several of the legal instruments in force. That process had led to the establishment of a refugee council, which had been working in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. On 27 September 2018, Angola had launched Operation Transparency, which was aimed at combating illegal diamond mining. It was being carried out in seven provinces and had led to the voluntary repatriation of over 500,000 persons.

32. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that, in addition to the more than 170,000 foreign nationals living in Angola in a regular situation, others lived in an irregular situation, particularly in the border areas. The presence of large numbers of migrants in diamond mining areas had serious economic, security and environmental ramifications. Some diamond mining companies had lost their licences as a result of Operation Transparency, which had in turn caused some migrants to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. Transport and food supplies had been provided in order to facilitate their return, and the Government had fully recognized the paramount importance of humanitarian concerns in that context. However, the return of such a large number of migrants en masse had inevitably presented certain challenges. Some migrants had died in the process, and various logistical challenges had been encountered. The President of Angola and the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had discussed the situation at a recent meeting.

33. **Ms. Caposso Fernandes** (Angola) said that, despite the Government's best efforts, more needed to be done to improve women's access to credit. The Federation of Angolan Women Entrepreneurs supported women who faced difficulties in obtaining credit. Women entrepreneurs nevertheless continued to experience discrimination in that regard. Her own organization, for example, had not received any public support between 2008 and 2018, despite having organized many forums and reached a large number of people. In addition to implementing microcredit initiatives, it was important to support Angolan women who wished to explore other opportunities, including capital-intensive projects in the oil and gas and diamond mining sectors.

34. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola) said that, with regard to access to credit, it was for individual financial institutions to determine the applicable borrowing criteria.

#### *Articles 15 and 16*

35. **Ms. Narain** said that she would appreciate an update on the initiative to introduce a register to guarantee compliance with child and family support obligations, which had been pending approval. In addition, she would be grateful for an update on the scope and status of the review of the Family Code by the Commission for the Reform of Justice and the Law. Had women's organizations and the public at large been consulted in that connection? What timeline had been set for the submission to the parliament of amendments to the Family Code? It would be interesting to discover whether traditional marriages celebrated under customary law had to be registered as de facto unions in order to be recognized, what protection was afforded to women in traditional marriages that did not meet the conditions

for recognition as de facto unions and whether campaigns were conducted to raise awareness among women in traditional marriages of their rights and obligations.

36. It was unclear to what extent the laws and practices of Angola discriminated against women with respect to succession and inheritance. It would be useful if the delegation could confirm that the Family Code contained a provision that favoured male children in the context of the management of a deceased person's affairs. If such a provision did exist, when would it be repealed? Furthermore, she wished to know how the State party intended to increase women's legal literacy, especially in rural areas, and to assist them in mounting legal challenges to discriminatory practices. She wondered whether family conflicts could be successfully resolved through mediation in municipal courts, whether wives risked being pressured into bringing conflicts to an end in the name of mediation, whether women had the right to legal representation during family mediation and whether legal aid was available for that purpose. Lastly, she asked whether there were any plans to prohibit the dowry system.

37. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that the review of the Family Code was a priority for the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and the Government as a whole. The discussion and approval of draft legislation in Angola was not subject to any particular time frame. However, a legislation plan had to be drawn up and followed. That process involved consultations with national and international bodies to ensure consistency with existing legislation and the country's international obligations, including its human rights obligations. The review of the Criminal Code, which had taken over 10 years in total, had proved to be rather protracted process. It was expected that, given the importance of the Family Code, the process of its review would take some time. The competing priorities of the executive and the legislative branches occasionally hampered the process of drafting and approving new legislation.

38. The Family Code provided for the institution of de facto unions, which were relationships between a man and a woman who had cohabited for three years. The institution had been introduced to protect persons in long-term relationships in the event of a dissolution of their relationship, and a subsequent division of assets, and in particular to protect women in the event of the death of a long-term partner. The Family Code stipulated that women in de facto unions enjoyed the same inheritance rights as women in marriages. In certain circumstances, the courts could apply the rules governing de facto unions to relationships that did not meet the usual criteria. Under the Family Code, women and men had equal rights with respect to the division of real estate assets following the dissolution of a relationship. Various campaigns had been conducted to raise awareness of the benefits of entering into an officially recognized form of relationship.

39. In a traditional marriage, the groom made a request to the bride's family for her hand, sometimes with an offering known as the *alambamento*. In large cities, the groom gave only a ring or flowers. Although some regions had once had a dowry system, the payment of a dowry was strictly voluntary. The question of whether or not a dowry should be repaid following the dissolution of a marriage was under discussion.

40. **The Chair** said that she would appreciate a response to her questions on women's rights with respect to the inheritance of land.

41. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola) said that, under Angolan law, a person would lose the right to hold a plot of land that had lain fallow for more than two years. The provisions in question were under review. The President had established a multidisciplinary commission to accelerate the process of land legalization. The question of land rights raised broader cultural issues, and there were significant differences among the various provinces in that regard.

42. **Ms. Peláez Narváez** said that she would like to know whether there were any legal provisions in force in the State party that limited a person's rights to marry, vote or exercise parental authority, perhaps on the basis of their disability status. In addition, she wondered whether any campaigns had been conducted to raise awareness of harmful practices against persons with albinism, most of whom were women.

43. **The Chair**, thanking the delegation for its replies, said that the Committee wished to urge the State party to accept the amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention. The replies to any outstanding questions could be submitted in writing.

*The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.*