



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
30 October 2019

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Seventy-fourth session

Summary record of the 1720th meeting*

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 22 October 2019, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Gbedemah

Contents

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

Seventh periodic report of Iraq

* No summary record was issued for the 1719th meeting.

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 10.05 a.m.

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

Seventh periodic report of Iraq (CEDAW/C/IRQ/7; CEDAW/C/IRQ/Q/7 and CEDAW/C/IRQ/Q/7/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Iraq took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Alkhateeb** (Iraq), introducing his country's seventh periodic report (CEDAW/C/IRQ/7), said that women had largely been excluded from social, political and economic life for much of his country's history. While today women played a much greater role in society, those living in areas controlled by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) were facing very dark times. Women there were subject to brutal treatment, including killing, abduction, rape and torture. They were exploited, regarded as commodities and barred from participating in political and public life.
3. The seventh periodic report had been prepared by a special committee comprising experts in women's rights. The report had been reviewed by non-governmental and civil society organizations and adopted by the Council of Ministers. The Government was considering ratifying or acceding to other international human rights treaties and their protocols, and establishing individual complaint mechanisms in accordance with those instruments. Iraq had withdrawn its reservation to article 9 of the Convention and the remaining reservations were subject to ongoing review by the Government. A ministerial committee had been created to follow up on the implementation of the Committee's previous recommendations, and the Ministry of Justice had set up a department to coordinate the work of the various agencies and committees tasked with monitoring compliance with each of the human rights treaties ratified by Iraq. Legislation being debated by the Council also included a bill amending the Social Welfare Act to provide shelter for victims of violence and a bill to provide health care to, and promote the economic empowerment and social inclusion of, Yazidi women.
4. The Council of State was currently considering Criminal Code amendments proposed by the Supreme Judicial Council to ensure the effective implementation of international human rights conventions, which included the removal of a provision that allowed men to punish their wives and the amendment of a provision whereby perpetrators of rape who married their victims were able to evade criminal sanctions. The bill on protection against domestic violence, which had been drafted following consultations with civil society, legal experts and other stakeholders, had been presented to the Council of Representatives. It covered many of the recommendations made by civil society organizations, namely to tackle polygamy, forced and early marriage, the possibility of invoking honour as a mitigating circumstance for crimes and discrimination against women in marriage. The judiciary had upheld the principle of giving mothers priority in custody proceedings, since it complied with the Personal Status Act and did not conflict with other laws.
5. The Government was working to set up a national women's council in response to calls from women's rights organizations, and proposals had been put forward to create a ministry for women and social development. In recent years, the country's plans and strategies in areas such as combating violence against women, reducing poverty, implementing universal periodic review recommendations, improving education and ensuring the provision of health care for mothers and children had helped advance women's rights and enhance their role in public and political life. In 2018, the Council of Ministers had approved a social fund for development, with contributions from the World Bank, the Government and other donors, to assist rural communities. In 2011, an agricultural fund had been launched in order to provide loans to support women living in rural communities.
6. The Committee for Peaceful Community Coexistence sought to promote women's participation in restoring security and stability to the parts of the country that had previously been under terrorist control. The activities carried out by government institutions and civil society as part of a national plan to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security had contributed significantly to enhancing the role of women

in peacekeeping. The Iraqi Government, in conjunction with the Kurdistan Regional Government, the United Nations and civil society organizations, was in the process of devising the framework for the national plan for the period 2019–2023, centring on the themes of participation, protection and prevention. The National Development Plan (2018–2022) for implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals would boost the participation of women in development programmes.

7. The Supreme Judicial Council had taken steps to ensure that crimes involving sexual violence were addressed after the parts of the country under terrorist control had been liberated. Thus far, courts had been reopened in the areas of Sinjar, Nineveh and Tall Afar and the appropriate legal procedures had been initiated.

8. Women had played an active role in parliamentary, regional and local elections since work on rebuilding the democratic system of government had begun in 2003. More than 25 per cent of seats in the Council of Representatives had been held by women since the adoption of an electoral quota. Women also occupied influential decision-making positions in local government and in the private sector.

9. The internal displacement crisis had proved to be one of the most difficult challenges facing the country in terms of protecting and promoting respect for human rights in general, and the rights of women in particular. The Government was making every effort to tackle violence against displaced women and girls and to ensure that their health-care and educational needs were met. In September 2016, Iraq had signed a joint communiqué with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and action had been taken with a view to meeting the commitments made in the communiqué.

10. **Mr. Zebari** (Iraq) said that the Kurdistan Region Domestic Violence Act, No. 8 (2011), among other decrees and legislative amendments, safeguarded the rights of women in all aspects of life. The region's draft constitution and two laws passed by the Parliament of the Kurdistan Region stated that women should account for no less than 30 per cent of the Parliament's members. Furthermore, according to the most recent rules of procedure, the Office of the Speaker had to include at least one woman. Following the 2018 regional elections, members of the Regional Parliament elected the first female speaker and three women were given positions in the Cabinet. In the judiciary, women had been well represented since the enactment of a regional law on judicial authority in 2009.

11. Several special institutions and governmental departments existed to protect and enhance women's rights in the region, which included women's rights organizations and shelters for women victims of violence. The High Council for Women's Affairs and the Directorate for Combating Violence against Women had offices at the district and subdistrict levels and in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons.

12. The Kurdistan Regional Government fully supported female journalists and the Kurdistan Journalists Union boasted a significant number of women members. Likewise, a large number of women worked in the security sector, with many serving as police officers in gender-based violence response units. In higher education, there were equal numbers of female and male students, and many high-ranking positions in universities were occupied by women. The female unemployment rate had declined in recent years, though far more women were employed in the public than the private sector. In 2014, the Regional Government set up a committee and assigned a special budget to rescue persons abducted from Yazidi communities.

Articles 1 to 6

13. **Ms. Al-Rammah** said that she wished to know more about the outcome of the first phase of the national plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security between 2012 and 2018 and the progress made towards the next phase of the plan for the period 2019–2023. She looked forward to hearing about the concrete achievements made in terms of amending the legislative framework, particularly article 41 of the Constitution, to address discriminatory practices against women. She would appreciate additional information regarding the status of the review of law provisions that discriminated against women. She wondered whether the State party would consider expediting the

amendment of legislation, such as the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, which might be construed as permitting honour killings and violence against women.

14. **Mr. Noor** (Iraq) said that, in 2014, Iraq was the first country in the Middle East and North Africa to have a national action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000). An emergency plan was launched after the attacks by ISIL and measures were introduced to address the mass internal displacement of persons. A new national plan to implement the resolution was being drafted, which would deal with the failings and shortcomings of the initial plan and would contain measures to restore peace and stability after the withdrawal of ISIL. Women were involved in the drafting process and a gender-sensitive approach would be incorporated into all areas covered. The Cabinet Secretary, in partnership with the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), was in the final stages of devising a media outreach plan. He was hopeful that it would be adopted by the Cabinet by the end of the year, and that it would be allocated the necessary resources for its implementation nationwide.

15. **Mr. Al-Maeni** (Iraq) said that Council of State was in the final stages of debating a bill that would amend many pieces of legislation to ensure that the same penalties applied to crimes committed by men and women, and to remove all mitigating circumstances that applied solely to men. The recommendations of NGOs and international organizations had been taken into account during the drafting of the bill.

16. **Ms. Al-Lami** (Iraq) said that one of the Government's main achievements since Iraq had entered a post-conflict phase had been the creation of a national committee for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The effectiveness of the first national action plan for the implementation of the resolution had been assessed on the basis of 30 indicators. Among the results obtained, there had been an increase in the number of women occupying decision-making positions, and measures had been taken to punish perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence against women. The second national action plan, which was being drafted in partnership with the international community and civil society, would reflect all decisions that complemented the resolution, the most recent of which was Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), and would be compatible with Sustainable Development Goal 5.

17. **Ms. Rana**, noting that the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs had been abolished as part of reforms carried out in 2015, said that she would appreciate an indication of whether the State party intended to establish an independent, unified national mechanism to promote women's rights, and, if so, when.

18. She wished to know what strategies were in place to strengthen partnerships with civil society organizations at all stages of the planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment of national policies on women, what measures were taken to ensure that the necessary financial and human resources were allocated for the implementation of such policies and whether there were specific timetables for implementation and indicators to monitor progress.

19. She would welcome details of any concrete strategies to implement the joint communiqué on the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence signed by Iraq and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on 23 September 2016.

20. According to reports, the Government had failed to secure the safe return of displaced women to their homes and ensure their rehabilitation so that they could participate in the reconstruction of areas previously controlled by ISIL. Large numbers of women and children continued to live in camps in dire, inhuman conditions, and the fate of many abducted women and other missing persons remained unknown. She would be grateful for information on the Government's transitional justice programmes and on any plans to criminalize conflict-related sexual violence through the enactment of special laws.

21. **Ms. Verges** said that she would be interested to hear whether any temporary special measures had been taken to combat gender inequality, including by increasing the number of women parliamentarians. She wished to know whether there were plans to impose quotas for women pursuant to Political Parties Act No. 36 (2015), what would be done to ensure the

effective implementation of the Act and what measures had been taken more generally to implement decisions and laws that promoted women's rights, such as Cabinet Decisions Nos. 178 (2014) and 254 (2016). Lastly, she asked what steps had been taken to rehabilitate vulnerable categories of women and reintegrate them into society.

22. **Ms. Lateef** (Iraq) said that the abolition of the Ministry of State for Women's Affairs had left a void to be filled, but that it would be difficult to achieve progress in that regard in the absence of political stability and security. Nevertheless, a bill was being prepared with the aim of establishing a ministry for women's affairs and a national council for women's affairs. It was hoped that the bill would be adopted by the end of 2019, and that a budget line would be created for the ministry.

23. **Ms. Al-Lami** (Iraq) said that there had been no delay in the follow-up to the joint communiqué. In March 2017, the then Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Bangura, had conducted a visit to Iraq, including Iraqi Kurdistan, following which steps had been taken to designate a focal point for the development of an action plan on the communiqué and identify the bodies responsible for implementation. The current Special Representative, Ms. Pramila Patten, had visited Iraq from 26 February to 5 March 2018, and, six months later, a plan of action had been drawn up to combat violence against women. Pursuant to the plan, mobile units had been set up to register births resulting from rape and forced marriages, including in areas previously controlled by ISIL. Units had also been created to support women victims of rape and strengthen women's representation in courts. Moreover, training on sexual violence had been provided to police officers, and grants had been offered to women victims of rape to facilitate their reintegration into society.

24. **Ms. Al-Rubaye** (Iraq) said that the Department of Women's Empowerment was taking measures to combat domestic violence, and was collecting statistics on such violence that would be included in a report to be published on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Steps had also been taken to establish shelters for victims and provide education and training to rural women to help them to set up their own businesses. The Department, in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund, had implemented the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women (2013–2017), which had brought about real change in various sectors and had contributed to efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5. The Strategy had been updated and would serve as a road map for future activities to eliminate gender-based violence.

25. The National Strategy for the Advancement of Iraqi Women had also been updated to include provisions on partnerships and the representation of women in the public and private sectors, and a questionnaire had been prepared to collect information on the measures that government ministries were taking on the ground to empower women.

26. **Mr. Mandalawi** (Iraq) said that the Northern Iraq offensive of June 2014 had led to the displacement of an estimated 892,311 families. Since then, the Ministry of Migration and Displacement had been encouraging families to return to their homes. To date, 226,441 were recorded as having done so, while a further 460,000 were thought to have done so but had not registered with the Ministry. It was expected that some 50 billion Iraqi dinars would be allocated equally to all returning families, for whom small-scale livelihood projects had been launched, including for occupations typically held by women, such as beekeeping, hairdressing and sewing.

27. **Mr. Alkhateeb** (Iraq) said that the Government was working tirelessly to secure the return of all displaced persons and close the camps where many were currently living.

28. **Mr. Zebari** (Iraq) said that the Kurdistan Regional Government had been taking steps to document crimes committed by ISIL. A genocide centre had been opened in Dahuk, and was responsible for, among other duties, implementing protocols relating to the investigation and documentation of rapes committed during the conflict. Some 50 awareness centres had also been established to provide health and psychological services to the 650,000 internally displaced persons living in camps in Iraqi Kurdistan. The number of refugees in the region stood at 270,000, with 3,000 having arrived during the previous week alone.

29. On 25 November 2014, the Office of the Prime Minister of Kurdistan Region had set up a special committee to investigate the abduction of Yazidi women and girls by ISIL, and funds had been set aside to free the victims, house them and assist their reintegration into society, including through the provision of legal, psychological and social services. Regarding details of those services, he drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 55 of the replies of Iraq to the list of issues ([CEDAW/C/IRQ/Q/7/Add.1](#)).

30. **Ms. Beythoum** (Iraq) said that, although laws had been adopted to promote women's representation, political and social barriers remained. Accordingly, during the most recent parliamentary elections in 2018, a campaign had been run to raise public awareness of the importance of women's participation. In recent years, a woman had been elected as mayor of Baghdad, and four others had been appointed as ambassadors. Women currently occupied more than 25 per cent of seats in the Council of Representatives, and there were 86 women judges and magistrates. The Prime Minister had addressed a note verbale to all government ministries encouraging them to appoint more women, which many of them had subsequently done.

31. Recently formed political parties, which were among the first to be granted a licence to operate, had women in their ranks, and, thanks to positive discrimination measures, women from all communities, including Yazidis, were being granted opportunities to participate in political life and in education at all levels.

32. Since the Supreme Judicial Council had been re-established as an independent body on 18 September 2003, there had been an increase in women's representation in the judiciary. Women could apply for positions within the Council and the judicial police force without discrimination, and many occupied decision-making positions within government ministries, including at the highest level.

33. **Ms. Al-Lami** (Iraq) said that a decision of the Federal Court, which had been welcomed by civil society, had made it clear that, in addition to the 25 per cent quota for women's political representation, political parties should ensure that they had women candidates standing for election. The Government's efforts to improve women's representation had resulted, most notably, in the election of a woman mayor in Baghdad, the capital city, and an increase in the number of women members of the security forces.

34. **Ms. Al-Jeboory** (Iraq) said that the Social Protection Act of 2014 had helped to ensure a decent standard of living for all citizens, with a special focus on women from vulnerable groups, such as women with disabilities and widows. Since the Act's introduction, thousands of women, including Yazidi and Shabak women, had benefited from social protection programmes. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was drafting a bill to extend the Act's coverage, taking into account the specific needs of widows, divorced women, minors and the wives of disappeared persons.

35. Two bills relating to women's rights had recently been drafted by the Ministry. The first related to the accession of Iraq to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183); the second concerned persons with disabilities, and had been drafted to take account of the gender dimension.

36. **Mr. Alkhateeb** (Iraq) said it was worth pointing out that, while the Constitution provided for a minimum 25 per cent quota for women's representation in the parliament, it did not establish an upper limit. In fact, women currently represented some 30 per cent of parliamentarians. Moreover, the Government's concerted efforts to bolster women's participation in public and political life had already borne fruit, with women increasingly occupying high-level roles in State institutions and in the private sector, thus proving that there were no administrative barriers to women's participation.

37. **Ms. Harki** (Iraq) said that, in the Kurdistan Region, legislation to tackle honour crimes had brought about a reduction in the number of honour killings. More than 1,500 women at risk of honour crimes had sought support in shelters set up for that purpose, where they had received psychological assistance.

38. In 2018, around 9,000 displaced persons and refugees – almost two thirds of them women – had benefited from outreach efforts in connection with the national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). In that connection, three

mobile teams had been created to carry out awareness-raising campaigns in the Region's camps for refugees and displaced persons. Any complaints of violence that had been received by persons in those camps had been transmitted to the relevant authorities.

39. **Ms. Gabr** said that, despite the clear political will demonstrated by the Government, patriarchal attitudes and outmoded stereotypes of women persisted in the State party, making it difficult for women to attain high-level positions and play a more productive role in family life and in society. She wished to know how the Government intended to break those stereotypes and whether it had considered collaborating with civil society to that end.

40. She welcomed the fact that the Government planned to re-establish the Ministry for Women's Affairs and emphasized the importance of ensuring that the Ministry was allocated the necessary funding to carry out its mandate. She would like to know whether indicators had been defined and an assessment carried out in respect of the first national strategy for reproductive, maternal and child health, for the period 2013–2017, and whether a dedicated budget had been allocated for the strategy's implementation. She noted that the Family Court, which had proved useful in dealing with family disputes, had been abolished by the Supreme Judicial Council in 2017 and would be interested to know why it had made that decision.

41. Regarding violence against women, she would appreciate statistical data on the number of cases of violence against women, including against Yazidi women and girls, that had led to prosecutions and convictions and information on the sentences that had been handed down. She wondered whether there were plans to remove the requirement for victims of violence to obtain a court order before gaining access to a shelter and whether the Government would relax the rules to enable NGOs to establish and run their own shelters. She would welcome more information on the content of the bill on combating domestic violence, the measures taken to combat so-called honour crimes, including the penalties prescribed for such offences, and the efforts made to put an end to the practice of female genital mutilation.

42. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to know more about the Government's efforts to combat trafficking in women and girls in the State party, including whether a clear time line had been established for the adoption of a specific national action plan to combat trafficking in persons, what measures the Government had taken to ensure the effective implementation of the Human Trafficking Act of 2012 and whether there were plans to set up a hotline for victims, which would have the added benefit of improving the recording of trafficking cases.

43. According to information received by the Committee, the State-run shelter for trafficking victims had inadequate funding and lacked specially trained staff. It would therefore be helpful to know whether the Government would permit NGOs to set up shelters for victims of trafficking, provide those shelters with any necessary support and remove the administrative barriers to victims' access to such shelters. Lastly, he wondered how many cases of sexual violence against women inmates had been prosecuted and convicted and what sentences had been imposed.

44. **Mr. Al-Bayyaa** (Iraq) said that human rights principles had been incorporated into the school curricula, giving effect to the recommendations made during the previous universal periodic review and helping to address outmoded stereotypes of women. Negative stereotypes had been removed from the majority of school textbooks and the positive role played by women had been highlighted. Course topics also included women's participation in public and political life. Teachers also received training on human rights principles. In cooperation with several international organizations, ad hoc human rights training was provided to teachers working in public and private schools. Almost 1,000 teachers had attended those training sessions between 2017 and 2019.

45. **Ms. Ahmed** said that gender equality units had been established in all ministries of the Kurdistan Regional Government. The gender unit of the Ministry of Education was in the process of amending the school curricula to incorporate the principle of gender equality. A code of conduct for all personnel working in schools had been drawn up to further integrate the principle of gender equality in schools. The gender unit was also involved in interministerial efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Lastly, measures that had been taken in order to combat early marriage included promoting girls' education and passing a law aimed at reducing the school dropout rate for girls.

46. **Mr. Alkhateeb** (Iraq) said that Iraq was one of the few countries in the region to have passed a law aimed at promoting the role of civil society organizations and their participation in all areas of public and political life. For that purpose, the types of entities from which those organizations could receive funding had been clearly defined. In addition, civil society was represented in all committees established by the Cabinet. However, deep-rooted customs and religious principles in society currently made it difficult for the Government to permit NGOs to run their own shelters. It recognized that greater awareness-raising and outreach were necessary in order for progress to be made in that regard.

47. **Mr. Alobaid** (Iraq) said that the Supreme Judicial Council aimed to expedite all trials for crimes committed by ISIL between 2014 and 2016. The Council had instructed that all cases of sexual and gender-based violence were to be examined. However, it was difficult to provide statistics on such violence since cases were not registered by offence but by the name of the plaintiff. No new legislative measures had been taken to reinstitute family courts.

48. **Mr. Al-Maeni** (Iraq) said that the Protection from Domestic Violence Bill had been referred to the Council of State by the Government and was now in the final stage of review. He hoped that it would be submitted to the parliament in the near future. It had been an enormous undertaking, in which the Government had worked with civil society organizations. The bill gave a comprehensive definition of the offence of domestic violence, covering physical, sexual, economic and psychological harm to family members. A special unit had been established in order to speed up legal proceedings. It had been deemed preferable to link the unit to the Council of Ministers rather than to a single ministry. It would have financial and administrative independence and a mandate to run awareness-raising campaigns on domestic violence, to register cases and refer them to the investigating judge, protect victims by placing them in shelters and indeed to run shelters itself. Related measures included the appointment of ad hoc courts to consider family-related cases on referral from other courts, the public prosecutor or the special unit.

49. A fund had been created to help improve conditions in shelters and empower victims. Measures to protect victims included referral to clinics and the obtaining of undertakings from perpetrators not to cause further harm. If the victim was a child the court should rule on guardianship within seven days.

50. With regard to honour crimes, he said that the sanctions and mitigating circumstances provided for in the Criminal Code had been amended. The penalty for rape was now life imprisonment; the victim's being under the age of 18 was regarded as an aggravating circumstance. The provisions of the Code permitting a rapist to marry his victim had been abrogated. However, marriage was still a possibility subject to the victim's consent, or at her request. In such cases, no divorce was possible until five years had elapsed and, if the grounds for divorce were arbitrary, then the original punishment for rape would still apply.

51. Abortion was no longer a criminal offence if the life of the woman was in danger.

52. **Mr. Noor** (Iraq) said that there were two bills on female genital mutilation before the parliament. Under the Constitution, both the President and the Prime Minister were permitted to submit bills to the parliament; they would be compared and if they were not mutually incompatible they would both be accepted.

53. **Mr. Zebari** (Iraq) said that numerous campaigns on female genital mutilation had been carried out in Kurdistan Region and in 2011 legislation had been adopted punishing the practice with a fine or imprisonment. Data collected from clinics by the Kurdistan Regional Government had shown that there were few areas where the practice persisted and there had been a sharp drop in the number of cases since 2010.

54. No mitigating circumstances now applied in respect of crimes of honour. Under legislation adopted in 2015, the Kurdistan Regional Government had ceased to apply the provisions of the Iraq Code of Criminal Procedure that reduced the penalty incurred by a husband who killed a member of his family for reasons of honour.

55. A special committee had been established, with its own budget allocation, to register and investigate cases of abduction by ISIL and to collect data and evidence. The Ministry of the Interior had set up a centre for the treatment and rehabilitation of women victims of ISIL. Additionally, there were more than 50 centres to support the families of genocide victims.

56. The increase in the number of cases of gender-based violence was attributable to incidents occurring in the camps for displaced persons and refugees in the region, rather than to incidents involving local residents. There were more than 20 camps in the province and the Regional Government was spending vast sums of money to register cases and protect refugees and displaced persons.

57. **Mr. Alkhateeb** (Iraq) said that temporary marriage was a purely religious institution that had no basis in law. It was therefore difficult to take any legal action. Those entering into such a marriage were bound as strictly as those entering into a legal marriage, the only difference being the period for which it was contracted. The practice was not widespread. He would be grateful to receive any information the Committee might have at its disposal.

58. **Ms. Al-Lami** (Iraq) said that a committee had been established to develop a new strategy for the advancement of women for the period 2019–2023, based on an evaluation of the previous strategy, which had been put in place just before the ISIL invasion. The new strategy addressed issues such as stereotyping, communication and the media, and civil society and the Ministry of Education had been closely involved in preparing it. It would be financed by the institutions responsible for its implementation, namely the departments dealing with women's issues and the empowerment of women, all of which were closely linked to the national machinery for the advancement of women.

59. **Mr. Noor** (Iraq) said that, between 2013 and 2019, 380 arrests had been made for commercial sexual exploitation; there had been 62 cases of forced prostitution and 37 of organ trafficking; 439 persons had been arrested and charged with human trafficking and criminal proceedings had been taken in 32 of those cases.

60. Iraq practised only kidney transplants, and they were based on voluntary donations. However, there was a certain amount of illegal exploitation of donors, which could give rise to prosecution. Potential donors were subject to a psychological examination in order to ascertain that they were not being exploited; no one under the age of 18 was permitted to donate organs. It was worth noting that Iraq was now classed as a tier 2 State in the United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report, having previously been classed tier 3.

61. The Supreme Judiciary Council had taken steps to resolve jurisdictional conflicts and to help courts make a clear distinction between trafficking and prostitution.

62. **Ms. Ameline** said that political coordination would be of the utmost importance in all the projects the delegation had described. It would be best to create a special ministry, while retaining the interministerial structures, and to ensure proper budget financing. A full review of women's status in the country was a matter of priority, not least as a sign of recognition of the courage the women of Iraq had shown in recent times. Donors were fully supportive of the country's current efforts; she would like to know whether the State party had a plan for the rapid implementation of its legislative review that it could submit for their consideration. Lastly, she would like to know when the bill on Yazidi women survivors might be adopted.

63. **Ms. Haidar**, recalling that the question of legislation on protection from domestic violence had been raised during consideration of the State party's previous periodic report, said that she would like to know why the bill, which dated from 2015, had not yet been passed into law.

64. She also wondered whether there were any plans to offer compensation to the women of other minorities than the Yazidi who had suffered at the hands of ISIL.

65. **Mr. Safarov** said that it was important to put in place a special action plan on the prevention of trafficking that made reference to international standards. He wished to know what the State party was doing to prevent the practice of *fasliya* marriage, whereby inter-tribal conflict was resolved by one tribe giving one or several women and girls for marriage to another tribe.

66. **Ms. Al-Rammah** said that there appeared to be several different types of shelter for victims of violence, but little in the way of financial and human resources to deal with the urgency of the problem. She would like to know what measures were being taken to improve

the support provided to victims. She would also like to know what methods were used to distinguish between the victims of crimes relating to prostitution and the victims of trafficking.

67. The head of delegation had said that the institution of temporary marriage was not widespread, but she would appreciate receiving some idea of the figures involved. She wondered whether such unions were formalized in a religious ceremony and whether the practice was prevalent among particular clans. She would like to know what steps were being taken to address the practice, which was, after all, not legal.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.