



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General  
2 August 2013  
English  
Original: French

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child Thirty-ninth session

### Summary record of the 1032nd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 20 May 2005, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Doek

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*Second periodic report of Nepal*

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

**Consideration of reports of States parties** (agenda item 5) *(continued)*

*Second periodic report of Nepal* (CRC/C/65/Add.30; HRI/CORE/1/Add.42; CRC/C/Q/NPL/2 (list of issues); CRC/C/RESP/88 (written replies of the Nepalese Government, available in English only))

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Nepal took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Joshi** (Nepal) said that Nepal, which had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, had adopted many legal, institutional and administrative measures to give effect to the Convention, including the 1992 Children's Act — about to be amended to cater for the new situations faced by children — and the 1999 Child Labour Act, as well as adopting a national plan of action for children (2005–2015), implementing a campaign to promote access to education for all and setting under way the procedure for ratifying the two optional protocols to the Convention.
3. In order better to fulfil its obligations under the Convention, Nepal had opted for an holistic approach involving all of the stakeholders working to improve the situation of Nepalese children — governmental agencies, United Nations institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other local bodies — by taking action in areas as varied as health and nutrition, education and training, child labour, the prevention of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking and the rehabilitation of children with a disability.
4. Major institutional advances included the creation of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the establishment of juvenile benches in the 75 district courts, the Central Council for Child Protection, the National Human Rights Commission, the Commission for *Dalit* (Untouchables) and the National Commission on Women.
5. That range of measures had made it possible to promote and better protect the rights of the child, but shortcomings in the formulation of policies and implementation of programmes, political instability, the security position and indeed the scarcity of resources were all factors holding back the full and comprehensive implementation of the Convention. It was the intention of the Government of Nepal to work, in the future, towards including issues relating to the rights of the child in national development policies; to reduce the inequalities between boys and girls and rural and urban areas in terms of access to basic health-care services and to education; to secure universal access to primary education and to quality health-care services; to combat neonatal mortality; to give effective application to the laws in force in relation to children; to reduce the incidence of child labour and other forms of exploitation; to offset the effects of the Maoist insurrection on children and women; and to reintegrate children who had been displaced by the armed conflict and also children who had been the victims of natural disasters.
6. The report had been submitted in a particular context, as Nepal had, for the past nine years, had to deal with the violence and acts of terrorism committed by the insurgents, which had undermined the people's rights and fundamental freedoms. There were ever-increasing numbers of homeless people, orphans and widows, and threats, acts of intimidation and kidnappings were commonplace. The insurgents recruited many minors by force, thus preventing them from exercising their rights to education and health care, as well as other fundamental rights.
7. Given the scale of the insurrection, the State had been compelled to declare a state of emergency to safeguard the nation's security and alleviate the suffering of the population. The relative stabilization of the situation had made it possible subsequently to lift the state of emergency, in accordance with the Constitution, and all rights and freedoms had been

restored. The Government was now endeavouring to create the right conditions for a return to democracy, as evidenced by the organization of municipal elections at the end of the year, which would mark the first stage in consolidating a pluralist democratic structure. Nepal had also signed with the High Commissioner for Human Rights a memorandum of understanding providing for the opening of an office of the High Commissioner in Kathmandu, demonstrating its attachment to human rights.

8. **Ms. Smith** welcomed the quality of the State party's second report, which had been drafted in accordance with the Committee's guidelines, as well as the written replies which provided up-to-date information on the situation in Nepal.

9. She also welcomed the adoption of new legislation replacing prison sentences for minors with community service or extended placement in detention centres, as well as the Supreme Court judgment finding to be invalid a provision of the Children's Act authorizing the use of corporal punishment.

10. The Government of Nepal was required to guarantee the protection of children in all circumstances, but the civil war was not the sole factor impeding the application of article 6 establishing the right to life, as poverty and poor standards of health were responsible every year for a large number of deaths, in addition to those caused by landmines and other explosive devices used by the parties in conflict.

11. The Committee wished to know whether the programme for the care of childhood disease and nutrition implemented in 2002–2003 had been extended and continued to produce results, and what had been the outcomes of the programmes to combat diarrhoea and dehydration. It was also necessary to establish whether it was true that, as a result of the conflict, the NGOs and some senior government officials were no longer able to access certain parts of the country and, consequently, their inhabitants, and, if that was the case, how many children were affected and how effective was the programme to register displaced persons within the country.

12. It would also be useful to know whether the mandate of the Nepalese Human Rights Commission had been renewed on expiry, in May 2005, and whether the Children's Bureau, which the Commission had set up in November 2004, was effectively up and running.

13. Further information on the current level of international aid to Nepal and on the activities of the NGOs and private-sector bodies would be welcome. The delegation might also confirm or reject the claims that government forces were using children as spies or messengers; describe the measures taken by the Government to protect the children recruited by force by the Maoists; explain what happened to them when they were taken prisoner by government forces; and, in the climate of impunity that prevailed in Nepal, explain what measures were being taken to prevent massacres, rape and torture and to bring perpetrators to justice.

14. **Mr. Siddiqui** asked about the size of the overall budget allocated to the social services between 2000 and 2005, and what percentage of the budget for primary education had been allocated to the building of new schools, the purchase of textbooks, the award of scholarships to *Dalit* children and the establishment of syllabuses. It would be helpful if, in its next report, the State party could include statistics on how the budget for children was allocated by sector.

15. The delegation might provide further details of acts of discrimination against *Dalit* children and girls, by indicating the scale and nature of such acts and whether they were on the decrease. It would be useful in that connection to know whether the measures taken by the committee set up to address the issues of ethnic groups, the *Dalit* community and indigenous groups, as well as those taken by the High-level Commission for the *Dalit* had

produced results and what the outcome had been of the Eight-Point social reform programme presented by the Prime Minister to Parliament in 2001. Recent statistics on the number of *Dalit* children in receipt of study grants, the educational standards of recipients and the extent to which the grants alleviated discrimination would also be useful.

16. The delegation might also like to indicate whether legislation to prohibit the dowry system had been adopted, as that practice often resulted in physical abuse of young wives, and specify whether the trafficking of women and girls for prostitution was decreasing.

17. The Committee also wished to know whether children born in the territory of Nepal of a Nepalese mother and a foreign father continued to be refused Nepalese nationality, and whether the Government of Nepal had set a deadline for establishing gender equality in relation to education. Lastly, it would be interesting to know whether boys and girls were similarly affected by malnutrition and child labour.

18. **Ms. Khattab** asked for further information concerning the de facto discrimination that seemed to affect the *Dalit* children, children with a disability, street children, the children of refugees and asylum-seekers, indigenous children and children from minority groups, as well as the measures which the State had taken to bring an end to the particularly violent discrimination against young girls as a result of ancestral practices such as dowry and the traditional institutions of *badi*, *deuki*, *jhuma*, *kumari* and *kamlaris*.

19. The lack of awareness of the problems of discrimination and domestic violence, of which women and young girls were the principal victims, was deplorable, as was the fact that the minimum marriageable age (18 years) was not respected in the case of girls.

20. It would be helpful to know what measures the Nepalese authorities intended taking to ensure that births were registered in practice, particularly in rural areas and areas involved in conflict, and to extend the registration of births to the refugees from Bhutan.

21. **Mr. Zermatten** asked whether, following the initial consultations with children at national and local level, the 1992 Children's Act or subsequent implementing provisions were being amended to enable children, as legal persons, to be heard and to express their views in legal proceedings, whether of a civil or criminal nature, and in administrative procedures, particularly in relation to education, that affected them.

22. **Mr. Kotrane** was dismayed that the State party's delegation did not include a woman, and that Nepal had not ratified ILO Convention No. 105 on the Abolition of Forced Labour.

23. The age of criminal responsibility for children was particularly low, which was very worrying because they could be sentenced to terms of imprisonment from the age of 10 and were sometimes detained with adults.

24. The Committee wished to know the precise responsibilities of the National Human Rights Commission, set up in 2003, whether it was a supervisory body with specific responsibility for protecting human rights, and particular the rights of the child, and whether there was a system for making complaints.

25. **Ms. Aluoch** asked whether, in addition to the official statistics provided by the ministries, the data collection system set in place in collaboration with the Central Council for Child Protection collected data compiled by the various civil-society and private-sector organizations.

26. **Ms. Lee** wished to know whether the State party intended to adopt fresh initiatives to make the media aware of the need to protect privacy and, in particular, to define with the media a code of conduct to prevent the identity of the victims of paedophiles from being revealed.

27. **Mr. Filali** asked from what age exactly it was possible to require a young person involved in terrorist activities to appear before the courts under the terms of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and asked for further information on any training courses organized for officials responsible for applying the laws, particularly juvenile court judges and police officers who were frequently accused of ill-treatment. He regretted the fact that the cases were improperly brought before the courts alleging a “breach of the peace” in the absence of proper evidence.

28. **Mr. Liwski** asked whether specific measures were taken to encourage the establishment of youth associations in Nepal, and to what extent the anti-terrorist legislation and security measures in force hampered the exercise by children, and adolescents in particular, of the freedom of association provided for under article 15 of the Convention.

29. **Mr. Pollar** asked to what extent domestic legislation had been brought into line with the provisions of the Convention, especially with regard to the ban on corporal punishment and the right of a minor under the age of 16 to file a complaint, as well as the right to name and nationality. It would be interesting to know whether bodies such as UNICEF had been consulted in connection with drawing up the national plan of action for children.

30. He also wished to know whether there had been an assessment of the operation and effectiveness of the arrangements for coordinating the many national and local authorities for protecting the rights of the child that had been set in place, as well as of the system for making complaints available to children — emergency telephone counselling services and access to the Human Rights Commission — and of the awareness-raising measures concerning the provisions of the Convention.

31. **The Chairperson** asked for further information on the responsibilities, working methods and results of the Commission set in place to investigate the many cases of disappearance recorded in Nepal, as some 600 complaints had already been filed and about 1,500 cases of disappearances reported, about 1,200 had been ascribed to the army and 300 to the Maoists.

*The session was suspended at 11.10 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.*

32. **Mr. Acharya** (Nepal) reminded the Committee that, for nine years, Nepal had been contending with a Maoist insurrection and that the atrocities that had been committed, breaches of both humanitarian law and human rights, were unprecedented in a country known for its tolerance and harmony; the Human Rights Commission had, moreover, adopted a resolution condemning the crimes against humanity committed by the Maoist rebels.

33. Even though the Government was sparing no effort to offset the impact of the insurrection, on children in particular, it was experiencing great difficulty in guaranteeing the right to life, to education and to freedom of thought for everyone, in remote areas in particular. It had, however, to be made clear that at the first sign of trouble, the security forces did their best to protect civilians.

34. The Nepalese security forces only used landmines for defensive purposes to protect strategic installations, and there was currently no evidence to suggest that children had fallen victim to devices which they had laid. In contrast, the home-made mines and explosive devices used on a massive scale by the rebel Maoist army in its guerrilla activities had sadly claimed many victims, particularly among children. It was to be hoped that the protests of the international community would soon have an impact.

35. **Ms. Smith** asked whether the activities of the Maoists were hampering the vaccination programme recently launched in Nepal or other health programmes.

36. **Mr. Acharya** (Nepal) replied that the Maoist insurgents were active throughout Nepal but did not control any region in its entirety and that the Government was therefore pushing forward, albeit not without difficulty, its public-health programmes. The programme for the distribution of vitamin A was already a success, poliomyelitis was on the way to being eradicated and a large-scale vaccination campaign against measles had just been set under way.

37. The system for recording persons displaced within Nepal was still incomplete. The Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons had visited different areas of the country, including those worst affected by displacement of the population, and had met with many interlocutors. The Representative had stressed the need to put into effect a general strategy, with the support of the international partners, in order to cope with the problem of displaced persons, and the Government had therefore embarked on the process of drawing up guidelines on the basis of the standards set by the United Nations and of establishing a comprehensive policy. Some 10,000 displaced persons had already been registered in several regions and that was just the start.

38. **Ms. Smith** asked whether displaced children were able to attend school and in what conditions.

39. **Mr. Sapkota** (Nepal) replied that, working with UNICEF and the NGOs present on the ground, the social services were endeavouring to identify displaced children before going on to review with the officials in the relevant district whether it was possible for those children to attend school. If the existing schools were already overstretched, the authorities did what they could to bring in teachers or to set up a school near to where the displaced children were living.

40. **Mr. Acharya** said that the Government attached great importance to the independence and impartiality of the National Human Rights Commission and to its continued work. New members of the Commission would be appointed when the term of office of the current members expired, and the authorities would ensure that they were able to perform their duties in absolute compliance with the Paris Principles.

41. The Government did not have exact figures concerning the number of children recruited or kidnapped by the Maoist rebels and used in the armed conflict, as families reported only a fraction of cases to the authorities. However, no minor was currently employed by the regular army as a messenger or cook or in any other capacity. That practice had been completely abolished some years back.

42. The many cases of disappearance were a matter of grave concern to Nepal, but it had to be made clear that in the country's current circumstances the fact that a person had disappeared did not mean that he or she had been physically eliminated. The National Human Rights Commission had been able to clear up about one third of the 1,400 cases referred to it, and had established that it had been given some names by the Maoists themselves in an effort to minimize the number of their soldiers killed during attacks on official buildings or security force installations. Furthermore, 195 of the 267 cases brought to the attention of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances had been resolved: 60 per cent related to detainees who had already been released and between 20 per cent and 25 per cent to persons detained under various pieces of legislation; only six or seven individuals had actually been killed. In accordance with the recommendations of the Chairperson of the Working Group, who had visited Nepal in 2004, the Government had undertaken to set in place a centralized system for registering disappearances and, since January 2005, just nine cases had been referred to the Working Group.

43. The Government was doing everything it could to prevent impunity. An allegation of abuse committed by the security forces triggered an inquiry. Penalties and disciplinary measures had been imposed on about 100 soldiers and a similar number of police officers.

Prosecutions had also been brought before the ordinary courts. One soldier had been given a prison sentence. Given the difficult backdrop of combating insurrection, there was no doubt that there could be isolated breaches but they had nothing to do with Government policy. The establishment of the bureau of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Kathmandu should make a major contribution to preventing such acts and ensuring that perpetrators did not go unpunished.

44. **Mr. Filali** asked whether the families of the disappeared received State aid.

45. **Mr. Kotrane** was surprised that the measures taken by the Government to prevent impunity had not led to a reduction in the number of summary executions, which in fact appeared to be following a pattern. He wondered whether that trend did not reflect a lack of awareness of the responsibilities on the part of the security forces and a lack of information to the public on the penalties already imposed on soldiers guilty of such acts.

46. **Mr. Siddiqui**, while vigorously condemning the violence committed by the rebels, stressed that it was important not to lose sight of the fact that the rebel movement was fuelled by poverty and social exclusion, and that it was therefore necessary to tackle the problem of the social exclusion of certain groups, including *Dalit* children and girls.

47. **Mr. Acharya** (Nepal) acknowledged that the current social and economic situation provided fertile ground for insurrection, but pointed out that the Government had never refused to take into consideration the needs and demands of disadvantaged groups, as demonstrated by the range of programmes for women, the *Dalit* and indigenous groups. The Government, which was prepared to go so far as to reform the Constitution in order to reinforce local autonomy, had launched three rounds of negotiations which had unfortunately failed. The fact was that the Maoists were using the issues of poverty and discrimination not to seek constructive solutions but to promote their extreme ideology, which was incompatible with the principles of pluralist democracy.

48. **Mr. Sapkota** (Nepal) said that significant progress had been made in terms of coordination between governmental bodies, development partners, NGOs and youth associations. The Central Council for Child Protection had tried more particularly to promote the participation of representatives of civil society in activities on behalf of certain groups such as women and girls and, indeed, the *Dalit*.

49. A special emergency fund and a number of programmes had been set in place to assist the children affected by the internal conflict. More than 300 orphans had been placed in institutions where they benefited from reintegration measures. A programme had been set in place in 25 districts, with the support of a number of NGOs, in order to identify displaced children and provide them with health care and schooling. As a result of their closeness to the population, the district child protection councils and village child protection committees played a crucial role in that respect.

50. Although the registration of births was a practice alien to Nepalese culture and tradition, even in urban areas, levels of registration were increasing as a result of the awareness-raising campaigns conducted with the support of UNICEF. The "Welcome to school" programme also made it possible for all children to attend school, whether or not they had a birth certificate.

51. The Government had taken measures to improve the juvenile justice system, including by way of a three-year project, backed by the Norwegian Government and several NGOs, under which, in an initial phase, 10 pilot districts had been selected in which judges, prosecutors, members of the security forces and social workers would be given special training. The army had undertaken to draw up guidelines on the standards to be complied with in regard to human rights, including the rights of the child.

52. Measures would be taken as of the next financial year to set out the different budget items in closer detail and give a clearer indication of the budget provision allocated to children. The State would do all it could to release the resources needed to implement the national action plan for children, which would be supplemented by Nepal's development partners. An independent committee to monitor the plan was to be set up shortly.

53. The Government and civil society had conducted large-scale campaigns to raise awareness of the problem of child trafficking, and close cooperation for that purpose had also been established between the Nepalese and Indian authorities, as well as between the two countries' civil-society organizations. Those efforts had begun to yield results, as trafficking in Nepal was currently tending to decline.

54. The law banned all forms of discrimination but, in practice, girls and the children of marginalized groups continued to suffer discrimination in the country. The dowry system continued to exist despite very strict legislation designed to eradicate it. The institutions known as *deuki* and *jhuma* (children working as sex workers in some communities) were banned, and UNICEF continued to implement programmes designed to eliminate them, with the help of civil-society organizations.

55. The programme to raise awareness among media professionals was continuing, and the Nepalese Press Council and professional media associations had drawn up a code of conduct on how to deal with child-related issues, the broad lines of which were to be included in the procedures of the juvenile justice system that were in the process of being finalized, as well as in the texts implementing the legislation on children.

56. The participation of children was keenly encouraged, and they had consequently been widely consulted when the periodic report and plan of action were being prepared. Children were able to express their views and concerns to the village development committees during special sessions. The Central Council for Child Protection and the district child protection councils encompassed 3,500 children's clubs which the Government was trying to associate within national and regional networks.

57. **Mr. Zermatten** asked whether the voice of the child was heard in judicial and administrative procedures, and wished to know in particular whether the 1992 Children's Act, or the relevant implementing regulations, providing for taking the statement of or interviewing the child.

58. **Mr. Sapkota** (Nepal) said that educational establishments had committees made up of teachers and the head of the establishment, and that an effort was being made to build links between the committees and children's clubs in order to discuss issues affecting children's daily lives, such as access to drinking-water taps, extra-curricular activities and problems of discipline. Things were on the right track in Nepal, as two of five individuals selected in each district to be involved in devising projects for children were themselves children. That measure had initially prompted misgivings, particularly within the authorities, but the notion that children had the right to be heard was gaining ground.

59. **Ms. Smith** asked whether there was a procedure for determining the age of children in the system of juvenile justice, which had its shortcomings in that children under the age of 16 were imprisoned with adults, and, if such a procedure existed, whether the child received the benefit of the doubt. The delegation might comment on the information concerning the conditions of detention for children, who were alleged to be deprived of drinking water, access to medical care and recreation. Further information on the so-called quasi-judicial procedures would be useful, as well as on the courts set in place by the Maoist insurgents, which apparently encouraged the use of corporal punishment.

60. **Mr. Siddiqui** asked whether the proportion of children aged between 5 and 14 who were economically active, which the report indicated to be in the region of 40 per cent in

1998, had since declined; what was the position with regard to the implementation of the 1999 Child Labour Act; and was the Committee for the elimination of child labour was pursuing its activities. It was also necessary to know what results had already been yielded by the programme designed to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2007. The same question arose in relation to the Child Labour Master Plan 2001–2010.

61. The Committee wished to have the most recent infant mortality figures, and to know whether the problem of chronic malnutrition among children had got worse since 1998 (when 54 per cent of children under 5 were suffering from growth retardation) and, if it was, what were the reasons for that.

62. Marriage between children was prohibited by law, according to which marriage was not permitted until the age of 18, but, according to statistics, some 24 per cent of minors were married. The Committee wished to know whether that percentage was falling; whether those responsible for such marriages were prosecuted; and whether campaigns were held to make the population aware of the risks of such practices to children's health and development.

63. **Ms. Lee** wished to know whether the budget allocated to the new measures to combat discrimination against children with a disability was adequate and what was being done to encourage families to overcome the social stigma attaching to the birth of a child with a disability. In that connection, further details on the special cards which, according to the report, the Government of Nepal intended distributing to persons with a disability to give them entitlement to certain privileges would be welcome, as would be further details as to the identity of the persons responsible for determining eligibility in the absence of a system for the early detection of disabilities.

64. The delegation might indicate whether it was planned to make education mandatory in the near future, and provide details on the measures proposed to make school safer, as well as the measures the authorities were considering to combat the discrimination in terms of access to education suffered by the *Dalit* and by girls.

65. **Mr. Krappmann** asked for further information on the results of the activity of the Fund to combat poverty, which were apparently very good, and also wished to know whether it was possible to expand that activity and to what extent it was supported by the international community.

66. The written replies referred to a project that was to result in high-quality, free and mandatory primary education for all by 2015; it would be useful to know the duration of that primary education and why it was not possible to introduce it sooner. The delegation might indicate whether measures had been taken to help families, at least the poorest among them, to cover certain expenses (school equipment, clothing and sometimes even school fees) related to their children's education. It was also be instructive to know how children managed to reconcile work and studies, and whether there were special programmes to help them get the best out of the situation. The Committee also wished to know whether the authorities were planning to place particular focus on poor children or children from disadvantaged groups in its plan to develop preschool education, to compensate for their initial disadvantage. Teacher training needed to be a priority.

67. **Ms. Anderson** asked whether, as the report appeared to indicate, it was actually planned to set up accommodation units for children living with their mother in detention and for children who had been charged or convicted, as it would be inappropriate for those two categories of children to live together.

68. The delegation might also indicate the number and percentage of cases of the transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child, and clarify whether mothers had access to

antiretrovirals and whether specific programmes were implemented to help children who had been orphaned as a result of AIDS.

69. Given that 75 per cent of rape victims were children, it was necessary to know whether preventive measures were under way to remedy the situation and why children were so exposed to that risk in Nepalese society.

70. **Mr. Liwski** asked how the health system was organized at central and local level, whether it was organized on the basis of regional disparities, and whether the privatization of some health facilities, which now applied high charges, had had the effect of reducing access for children, particularly the poorest children, to health services. The percentage of total public expenditure devoted spending on health had increased from 3.5 per cent to 5.03 per cent, which was to be welcomed, but it was also necessary to know whether that trend was set to continue. The delegation might also indicate what the response had been to the requests made at the regional consultations concerning improved distribution of staff and drugs and effective monitoring.

71. The Committee also wished to know whether the authorities had asked for the assistance of international organizations to improve vaccination cover in the most difficult situations (displacement of populations, insurrection, etc.), and whether measures were taken to combat infant diarrhoea, a water-borne disease, by guaranteeing access to drinking water for everyone. The delegation might also indicate what measures were envisaged to combat respiratory diseases, another major cause of mortality, and to deal with the alarming increase in cases of anaemia, and whether special arrangements had been made to look after the mental health of adolescents who had been displaced or were exposed to other risks.

72. **Mr. Zermatten**, noting that the report suggested that in cases of abuse and negligence, perpetrators and victims were treated in the same way, asked whether girls who were the victims of trafficking, for example, were actually imprisoned in women's units set up in the 16 districts in response to the problem. It would also be helpful for the delegation to provide clarification on what constituted an offence in terms of youth offending, as paragraphs 323 and 334 of the report appeared to indicate that children who were involved in immoral activities, had run away or caused a public nuisance were regarded as offenders. The Commission wished to know whether that was the correct interpretation, particularly as the apparent confusion between the treatment meted out to the perpetrators of offences committed against children and the child victims seemed also to exist in relation to abortion, which was illegal even in cases of rape or incest, the forced marriage of girls or the traditional practices involving the prostitution of *deuki*, *badi* or *jhuma* children, which similarly required clarification.

73. **Ms. Ortiz** wondered whether the policy on children separated from their parents was consistent with the Convention, and asked for details about the database relating to that category of children and on the bill on family reunification mentioned in the written replies. Of particular interest were what body bore responsibility here, whether children placed in an institution were placed there under a judicial or administrative decision and whether there had been progress in drafting the bill. The fate of children placed in those facilities, 95 per cent of which were run by NGOs, was not subject to any form of regulation or monitoring, and details on that point and on whether or not priority was attached to family reunification would therefore be welcome.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*