



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women
Thirtieth session**

Summary record of the 630th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 13 January 2004, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Acar

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

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

Combined second and third periodic report of Nepal (CEDAW/C/NPL/2-3)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Nepal took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Yudav** (Nepal), introducing her country's combined second and third periodic report, reiterated her country's full commitment to implement the Convention, which was essential to its development efforts, and had also been instrumental in strengthening its machinery for promoting the status of women. A number of positive developments had taken place since Nepal had ratified the Convention in 1991. The progress achieved had been reported to the Committee in 1999 and subsequent developments had been covered in the combined second and third periodic report, and in Nepal's responses to the questions raised by the pre-session working group. Compared with those of more advanced societies, Nepal's achievements might fall below expectations, but the process of promoting Nepalese women's socio-economic advancement was well under way. Gender issues were no longer the primary concern of a few pioneers or a specialized Government agency. They were gradually being integrated into sectoral development policies and consensus was being achieved among all development partners concerning the need to place them at the top of the national agenda. The Government's efforts to achieve broad socio-economic empowerment had been hampered by the activities of Maoist rebels since 1996, but the Government had introduced special measures to protect the rights and freedoms of more vulnerable groups such as women.

3. Civil society and development partners had collaborated with the Government during the preparation of the national periodic report, providing the Government with feedback on the implementation of the Convention, generating resources and mobilizing society. As a result, substantial progress had been made regarding the creation of an enabling environment, gender sensitization and institutional development, at the national and local levels. However, many

outstanding issues remained to be addressed within the context of the Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action. Nepal's current Tenth Plan on gender equality and human rights had placed women at the centre of development. It recognized equality for women, empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming as the foundation of efforts to achieve global national development targets, and recognized that women's empowerment was central to the productive development of human resources. The Government's major strategic policies included policies on gender mainstreaming, awareness-raising, increasing women's participation in policy-making and expediting legislative reforms in order to guarantee equality. The Government had recently approved a "CEDAW Plan of Action", which was conceived as a common platform of action for all development partners.

4. **Mr. Pathak** (Nepal), continuing his delegation's introduction of the report, outlined a number of new developments and initiatives for change, in the areas of policy and strategy development, governance reform, institutional development and legislative development. He also noted a number of substantial achievements, including the "CEDAW Plan of Action", the National Strategy on "Education for All", and the National Human Rights Action Plan, as well as the creation of the National Human Rights Commission, the National Women's Commission, and the National Dalit Commission, gender-sensitization activities, the creation of focal points and the inclusion of women in policy-making bodies.

5. Having also outlined a number of procedural and methodological achievements, which included the creation of a women's information database, the mobilization of civil society, gender assessment and gender budget analysis, he noted that many major challenges remained. Sociocultural challenges included the prevalence of traditional culture and customs, leading to patriarchy; discriminatory social practices, negative attitudes and gender stereotypes; the prevalence of gender-based violence and the subordination of women in society. In the area of governance, challenges included ensuring the effective implementation of international instruments, improving the institutional capacity of Government machinery for policy and programme implementation and effective law enforcement; and mainstreaming gender concerns into governance. Economic challenges included women's lack of equitable access to productive

resources, the feminization of poverty and the marginalization of rural women. In the legal sphere, there was the prevalence of discriminatory legal provisions and the lengthy process required to amend laws, and the lack of gender sensitivity and gender responsiveness in the legislative process. He noted a number of psychological challenges, including the low participation of men in gender and women's issues, the lack of family and community support to increase the psychological status of women and the subordination of women in social and economic activities. There were also a number of emerging issues, including equal rights to citizenship, changes in the traditional sociocultural environment, empowering and protecting migrant women and the impact of conflict on women and children.

6. Referring to signs of positive prospects for effective implementation of the Convention, he noted gender-responsive governance, the national priority accorded to women's rights and gender equality in the Tenth Plan, the institutionalization of gender concerns and rights-based development, among others. Lastly, he outlined a road map for carrying out his country's "CEDAW Plan of Action", under which the Government would seek to implement the Convention, together with its partners (including local bodies, civil society, the private sector and development partners), using a broad range of instruments and institutional mechanisms.

7. **Ms. Ferrer Gómez** said that it was her understanding that there were very deep-rooted stereotypes in Nepal, which put women at a disadvantage. The delegation of Nepal had stated that the provision of training was an essential tool in that regard, and that it had taken steps to introduce the gender perspective into its programmes. She wondered how many people had received such training, and in what sectors it had been provided. She also wondered about the prospects for extending awareness-raising activities aimed at political authorities, teachers, the health sector, lawyers and journalists, and whether the Government had worked with the mass media. Cooperation with radio stations would be especially helpful in that regard, since most Nepalese women were illiterate. It would be useful to know how the Government intended to work with people from various ethnic groups, since discriminatory practices continued to exist. Lastly, she wondered whether there had been

any significant progress in changing cultural practices influenced by patriarchal attitudes.

8. **Ms. Saiga** noted that the supplementary information provided by the representative of Nepal had included a long list of challenges and issues. However, since many Nepalese women lived in small, remote villages, she wondered how many were in fact aware of their rights, and whether the Government had conducted any surveys to gather relevant information. She noted that there appeared to be a number of different bodies responsible for implementing the Convention, and wondered how they were related, and asked for information about the procedure for proposing amendments to legislators. She wondered whether there had been an evaluation of the Ninth Plan, and how any such evaluation had been reflected in the current Tenth Plan, and when Parliament would be considering the bills on domestic violence and human trafficking.

9. **Mr. Flinterman** noted that the report of Nepal had been very frank, and had not hidden the fact that much work remained to be done in implementing the Convention in the country. He was pleased to note the priority attached by the Government to the repeal of discriminatory provisions, and wondered whether the law on citizenship was included in that regard. He was also pleased to note the Government's commitment to provide education for all, and especially girls, by 2015. With respect to the delegation's response to question 7 in the Committee's list of issues and questions (CEDAW/PSWG/2004/I/CRP.1/Add.5), he noted that even though the mandate of the National Human Rights Commission included rights covered by the Convention, the Commission had considered only a small number of cases of violations of women's rights. He would also appreciate additional information about the nature of the Commission, such as whether it could give final decisions, how exactly it related to the courts and whether it could act *suo motu* (and, if so, whether it had used that power). He would also be grateful if the delegation could explain the relationship between the National Human Rights Commission and the National Commission on Women.

10. **Ms. Morvai**, noting that Nepal had referred in its report to intra-institutional differences of opinion, suggested that the Government should remind its partners that women's rights were not a matter of private opinion, and that Nepal had an obligation under the Convention to ensure that they were respected. She

wondered how the recommendations made by the Committee in 1999 had been disseminated, and who was responsible for follow-up action in that regard, and would also be grateful if the delegation could explain its plans for implementing the Optional Protocol. With regard to harmful traditional practices, she wondered whether it was generally recognized that the Government had a clear legal obligation under the Convention to work towards their eradication. She would also appreciate information about women's inheritance rights, about laws and procedures regarding sexual harassment in the workplace and about the domestic violence bill. She had heard that widows lived in difficult circumstances, and wondered how the Nepalese delegation would characterize their situation, from the legal and sociological viewpoints.

11. **Mr. Melander** said that trafficking in women, which was recognized by the Nepalese authorities as a serious enormous problem, carried a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment under recent legislation. While he agreed that it was difficult to change attitudes through legislative reform, given the magnitude and seriousness of the crime it should not be impossible especially if the legislation was judicially enforced. He sought an explanation of the huge disparity between the 971 cases filed and the mere 169 prosecuted, and wondered whether information was available on the length of the various sentences handed down. Inasmuch as the report had provided scant information on the refugee issue, he asked whether women could apply for refugee status in their own right or were always treated as men's dependants in that regard.

12. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** commended the Nepalese authorities on their frank and informative — although somewhat repetitive — report and their achievements, such as the establishment of the national mechanisms, the Country Code (Eleventh Amendment) Act, the strategy for gender equality and the CEDAW Plan of Action. However, although the report accurately described women's situation, it was not always forward-looking and strategic. While it centred on women and their role in development, which was very important in a situation of poverty, it gave insufficient attention to achieving equality for women and ensuring them of equal status as persons and citizens. The report treated the subject of children as a women's issue, linking childcare provision to working women as though they alone were concerned with children;

normal benefits enjoyed by working women were treated in the report not as rights but as privileges.

13. The report appeared to accept inequality as fate, which was not really questioned. With regard to citizenship rights, which were unfair not only to women, but also to children, she asked whether she was right in thinking that children with non-Nepalese fathers remained stateless, a situation apparently not questioned in paragraph 52 of the report and which, together with polygamy and other highly discriminatory traditional practices, was not adequately addressed. Even when certain issues were addressed, little attention was paid to solutions. For example, the report did not describe follow-up action to legislation on violence and trafficking, although the situation had been clarified somewhat by the delegation's oral presentation. She asked how the authorities intended to eliminate all discriminatory legislation, adopt policies that responded to all those critical issues, change people's attitudes to discriminating norms and traditions and more effectively address gender equality as a common concern of women and men.

14. **Ms. Kwaku** said that the success of any national machinery depended largely on the financial resources allocated to it, and that Governments, especially in developing countries, often came up with wonderful ideas and programmes, but proceeded to starve them of necessary resources. She wished to know whether the regular and development budget allocations to the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare for 2003-2004 (response to question 2 of the list of issues) were adequate for running the Ministry, as well as other organs relating to women, and what percentage of the overall budget they represented.

15. **Ms. Gaspard** said that many discriminatory practices against women in Nepal resulted both from laws and from the social and cultural environment. Numerous projects had been designed to eliminate existing discrimination in the Constitution and in the laws, which called for urgent implementation of the Convention at both the constitutional and legislative levels. Although the delegation had confirmed the existence of the will for reform, that will appeared to encounter obstacles, as shown in the Government's responses to the list of issues, especially question 10. One difficulty noted therein was a lack of will in the political sphere regarding a commitment to gender equality. She asked whether the special group for women's issues established within the House of

Representatives was a voluntary or institutional group and whether it included men, since it was vital that men should be involved in enhancing the status of women. She asked whether the periodic report under consideration had been debated by Parliament and whether the Committee's concluding comments would be submitted to Parliament so that legislators were made aware that existing laws ran counter to the Convention, which Nepal had ratified unconditionally. There was an urgent need for political awareness-raising, and in particular areas, such as nationality, the need to amend the Constitution was even more urgent than the need to amend the laws.

16. **Ms. Khan** said that the report was clear and candid, although the written responses to the list of issues had been brief and sketchy and lacked detailed information. She was also disappointed that 6 of 10 members of the Nepalese delegation were men. On the positive side Nepal had ratified the Convention without reservations and it was the only country in South Asia to have an act such as the Treaty Act (1991), under which international instruments ratified by Nepal prevailed over domestic legislation Article 2 of the Act required the Government urgently to take all necessary measures to bring the domestic legislation into line with the Convention.

17. Given the continued existence of many discriminatory laws, she wondered how seriously the Government took its international legal obligations. Although it had taken steps to implement the Committee's concluding comments on Nepal's initial report, by, *inter alia*, amending the Country Code and other discriminatory provisions, there remained, according to local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 290 legal provisions that discriminated against women. She wished to know whether the Government had received any report from the NGOs that had done the research and what practical steps it was taking to amend the discriminatory provisions of the Constitution, particularly those at the centre of public-interest litigation, relating to women's citizenship and property rights.

18. Also, given the plethora of religious, linguistic, social and cultural groups and the society's strong patriarchal values, she asked what concrete measures had been taken to change harmful traditional practices and what was being done to ban some of those practices, as the Committee had recommended following its consideration of Nepal's initial report. In

particular, how had some measures introduced — such as the quota system in the civil service — been implemented: for instance, was there a special quota for *dalit* women in the civil service? Lastly, she greatly regretted that the amendment of the inheritance legislation still did not give women full and effective enjoyment of inheritance rights.

19. **Ms. Gabr** said she was encouraged by the interest and participation of Nepalese NGOs, many of which were represented at the meeting, reflecting the Government's desire to cooperate with civil society. Although the authorities had attempted to establish governmental and non-governmental organs for the exercise of women's rights, there remained various stereotypes and provisions that were unfair to women and called for cooperation between the non-governmental and governmental bodies in devising a plan for addressing them. She welcomed the road map created in order to face those challenges, but asked whether the authorities had considered the use of the special measures referred to in article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, which had been used during the Ninth Plan.

20. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling** said she had been present when Nepal's initial report had been considered by the Committee and particularly recalled the delegation's specific promise to take the action needed to comply with the Committee's recommendations; some improvements had indeed been made. She asked whether the analyses made by civil society had been included in the report under consideration, whether the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, henceforth responsible for implementing and amending relevant legislation, possessed the human and financial resources for so doing and whether it worked in tandem with the Ministry of Justice, normally responsible for legislative amendments. She asked whether thought had been given to establishing a framework law covering all discriminatory laws, thus accelerating the law reform, rather than amending each law individually; whether there were plans to launch an awareness-raising campaign once the laws had been amended and what kind of international cooperation would be needed; what time frame was envisaged for ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention and, once ratified, what legal mechanisms would be used to follow up the Committee's views on communications it received.

21. **Ms. Šimonovic** said that she would be grateful for more information on specific laws to be amended, including constitutional provisions, since the report stated that the Constitution upheld the principle of equality and human rights. However, the principle of equality could be construed differently from gender equality or equal rights of women and men. She asked whether the Constitution contained a clearly worded principle to the effect that women and men had equal rights or a clear provision on gender equality as such. It also appeared that some constitutional provisions contradicted the principle of equality and human rights. Under article 9, nationality and citizenship were transferred to men alone; that norm was clearly discriminatory against women and contradicted other sections of the Constitution which the authorities claimed guaranteed equal rights of women and men. Regarding the National Plan of Action on CEDAW and the road map, she asked whether the Government was endeavouring to repeal all discriminatory laws before 2005, in keeping with the Beijing Platform for Action.

22. **Ms. Pokharel** (Nepal) said that internal conflict and the need to address other pressing problems had caused Government agencies, including the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and the Human Rights Commission, to overlook women's human rights, as was shown by continued discriminatory laws and practices, inequality and social injustice. The National Commission on Women, which she represented, had therefore been established to specifically deal with those issues.

23. The Commission on Women had travelled to war-torn areas throughout her country, gathered information on women's human rights and legal and political rights, and issued a report, which included recommendations to her Government for a Constitution that provided for gender equality. Although a parliament had not yet been elected, which made achieving those rights difficult, she remained optimistic that progress would be made.

24. In addition to working towards legal reform, the Commission carried out activist work for the advancement of women. For example, it had spirited a girl away from Kathmandu so that she could meet her mother, who had lost custody of her daughter and been denied visitation rights.

25. With regard to the citizenship rights of women, no amendments to the Constitution could be made until

a parliament was elected, but efforts at reform were under way. Further information would be provided by her delegation in writing.

26. In conclusion, her Government had taken several encouraging steps towards promoting gender equality since the submission of the periodic reports, including the establishment of an agency to ensure that women and indigenous peoples were better represented in all sectors, establishment of a poverty alleviation fund and launching of a legal awareness campaign.

27. **Ms. Rana** (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the National Human Rights Commission, said that the establishment of the Commission in June 2000 by an act of Parliament — the only bill that Parliament had as yet introduced — had been a milestone in fulfilling the long-standing demand of the human rights community and civil society to make her Government accountable to its national and international human rights commitments. The Commission was fully committed to improving the human rights situation in her country. The act defined human rights as the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution and the rights embodied in the international human rights instruments to which Nepal was a party. The Committee, of which she was the only woman, included the Prime Minister, Chief Justice and leader of the opposition in the House of Representatives.

28. The Committee was responsible for investigating human rights violations by individuals, organizations and Government bodies; conducting public hearings on them; reviewing the human rights safeguards provided for under the Constitution; studying international human rights treaties and instruments; and making recommendations to the Government for the protection of human rights and suggestions on human rights reports to international agencies. It was also required to submit an annual report on its activities to the Government.

29. **Mr. Pathak** (Nepal) said that the national machinery for the advancement of women, including a high-level ad hoc advisory committee on discriminatory laws against women, the National Council for the Development of Women and Children, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, the National Commission on Women, the National CEDAW Committee and the National Human Rights Commission, were all working harmoniously to

advance gender equality and the rights of women. The Commission, an independent specialized agency, was in the process of becoming a separate statutory body. The Council had become less functional after the establishment of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. The National CEDAW Committee, part of the Ministry, was responsible for helping to prepare the periodic reports and monitor the effective implementation of the Convention.

30. His Government was developing legislation to ensure that 20 per cent of policy-making positions were filled by women. Regrettably, legislation on domestic violence and human trafficking had been halted with the dissolution of parliament. However, his Government would give priority attention to the bills once Parliament was restored.

31. Finally, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare had drawn the attention of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning Commission to the paucity of its resources. Its funding was clearly insufficient to meet the many responsibilities entrusted to it, including legislative reform and development, mainstreaming and coordination and monitoring and evaluation of policies regarding gender equality.

32. **Ms. Morvai**, recognizing that constitutional reform could not take place in the absence of a national legislature, asked for some idea of when such critical violations of women's human rights as the inability of mothers to transfer citizenship might be addressed. She wondered how women took part in the peace process and whether there were formal ways in which they could participate in peace negotiations. Commending the Nepalese Government for its recognition of the problem of trafficking in women, she said that its primary cause was poverty. Another underlying cause was prostitution: without it, there would be no such trafficking. She therefore urged the delegation of Nepal to raise the issue with bodies and organizations that dealt with women's rights.

33. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** praised the Government of Nepal for its ratification of the Convention without qualification and said that efforts should now be made to implement it fully. She recognized, however, how difficult that would be for a country with such ethnic and religious diversity. Nevertheless, one of the principles of the Convention was to do away with laws and customs that infringed on equality between women and men. While the targets for women representatives

in Government should not be unrealistic, setting quotas was feasible. She would like to know why, given the reputation of Nepalese women as competent and knowledgeable, they were not better represented abroad. Finally, more information would be welcome on the crucial question of nationality and the condition of fatherless children.

34. **Ms. Kapalata** (Rapporteur) commending the Nepalese delegation for its frank statements and report, said that the adverse effects of poverty on the implementation of the Convention might have been somewhat overemphasized. She hoped that the delegation would take into account article 7 of the Convention on the right of women to equal participation in public life and government policy-making. She would also welcome more information on the impact of the conflict on women and children in Nepal and how women had been incorporated into the peace process as agents of change.

35. **Ms. Popescu Sandru** thanked the delegation for its frank description of the situation of women in Nepal. She asked for more information on the recently established Committee on Reservations for women, including on its functioning and status. She wondered how, given the war raging in the country, the committee was able to identify and recruit women candidates. In that regard, she wondered why the quota for recruitment of women into the foreign service was only 5 per cent, while elsewhere in the civil service it ranged from 10 to 20 per cent. Noting that most of the small number of women currently in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs occupied low-level positions, she wondered whether the scheme of reservations envisaged recruiting more women to higher-level positions.

36. **Ms. Gaspard**, referring to the Constitution and the provision thereunder concerning the minimum percentage of women elected to Parliament, noted that 5 per cent was not much. Quotas often acted as ceilings and were seldom exceeded. Nepal needed progressive quotas, since they were basically meant to gradually establish equal representation for women in all institutions. In that regard, she wanted to know whether the Government had carried out any assessments of the participation of women in the management of local government bodies. The delegation should also explain why there were only 8 per cent of women in the civil service and whether the Government planned to take steps to increase that percentage. After all, as the

percentage of women increased in education at all levels, the natural expectation would be that their number participating in civil service recruitment exams would increase.

37. **Ms. Pokhrel** (Nepal) said that a quota of 20 per cent had been set as the minimum for women serving in all positions, including decision-making positions. The problem was how to ensure that all ethnic groups and all regions were represented in that 20 per cent quota. An act was under consideration to ensure 20 per cent representation of women in local government bodies.

38. **Mr. Pathak** (Nepal) said that the issue of women's representation in policy and decision-making had been discussed during the meetings on governance reform. Gender equality had been considered an integral part of such reform. Increasing the number of women in the civil service was a vital issue, which was why gender mainstreaming and capacity-building for women was one of the strategies of the reform programme. That would make it possible to gradually increase the total number of women applicants for the civil service exam from the current 5 per cent. The capacity-building programme should be enhanced and de-concentrated, at least to the regional level. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare planned to take affirmative action to increase women's participation at the policy-making level in the civil service.

39. The Committee on Reservations was an ad hoc committee under the governance reform programme; it had been given a deadline of three months to submit its report to the Government, which was ready to incorporate the reservations provisions into the Civil Service Act, which was in the process of amendment. It was high time for the Government to have meaningful reservations for women in policy-making.

40. **Ms. Shin**, noting the preponderant role played by women in rural areas, said that it was extremely important for the Government to focus much of its efforts towards improving the lives of rural women. She requested data on the situation of rural women and wanted to know whether rural women had the right to own land, which was very important for them to be able to secure credit and other benefits. Noting that women played a key role in agricultural production, she wondered how many agricultural development projects were directed by women. In her view, the

whole idea of gender mainstreaming in development programmes should be targeted differently.

41. **Ms. Patten** wanted to know to what extent across the board public awareness campaigns to explain the major obstacles to women's equality targeted men as well. Referring to article 12, she wondered whether the delegation could provide any data on initiatives being taken by the Government to enhance women's access to health. She would also like information on the budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Health over the past few years and on any efforts being made to decentralize the health services in the rural areas. Had the Government initiated any measures to provide accessible health-care services for survivors of gender-based violence in the refugee camps? Bearing in mind that 88 per cent of the total population lived in rural areas, she was concerned about the success of the microcredit programme and would appreciate data that would enable the Committee to assess the success of such programmes. The delegation should provide information on women living in conflict areas with regard to the integrated security and development programme mentioned in the reports and in the response to the list of issues — the special package programme. Moreover, information concerning the Government's financial support for the so-called self-employment activities, operating childcare centres, scholarships for affected children and skill-development programmes would also be appreciated.

42. **Ms. Manalo** expressed sadness and frustration with respect to the status of education for Nepalese girls and young women. She could not understand why a country struggling to overcome poverty had failed to adopt stronger measures and more effective means to conquer poverty and illiteracy. While there was a National Plan of Action on Education, it seemed inadequate. While primary education was compulsory and free, young girls did not go to school. When they did attend school, they either failed or dropped out. The low rate of tertiary education for women was disappointing. Vocational education was limited to low-level employment and low salaries. The very low budget earmarked for girls' education gave cause for concern. She suggested that giving absolute and top priority to developing a sectoral integrated strategic programme of education for girls, along with international assistance, particularly from the United Nations system, notably from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) might lead to some progress in the education of young Nepalese girls.

43. **Ms. Achmad** said that there was a need to focus on real equality between men and women, including in education. Nepal could make use of the Millennium Development Goals to promote universal basic education in the country. Equal access to a similar curriculum in all areas of education, including science and technology, was needed. Stereotypical attitudes, including in teaching methods, had to be addressed. In that regard, increasing the number of women not only in teaching, but in teacher education institutions, would go a long way towards addressing the issue. The Government should also set up training programmes for judicial and legislative personnel in order to enlighten them about equality and the principles of the Convention. In that regard, it could draw upon the guidelines prepared by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Emphasizing the importance of the girl child's education to poverty alleviation, she noted that unless equality of education started with both boys and girls, equal partnerships between girls and boys would be impossible. In the long run, equality benefited the whole country.

44. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling**, stressing the absolute priority of education for girls and women, asked whether the new plan for education contained appropriate budgetary allocations and whether financial incentives were being planned for families to send girls to school. To what extent were literacy programmes for adult women being planned?

45. **Ms. Popescu Sandru** said that she would appreciate information on the priorities and main objectives of the National Strategy for "Education for All". Additional information on the situation of university education, especially the percentage of women at the university level, would also be most welcome.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.