



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Summary record of the 741st meeting (Chamber A)

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 9 August 2006, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Šimonović (Vice-Chairperson)

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In the absence of Ms. Manalo, Ms. Šimonović, Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

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)

Sixth periodic report of Denmark
(CEDAW/C/DNK/6; CEDAW/DEN/Q/6 and
CEDAW/C/DEN/Q/6/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the representatives of Denmark took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark), introducing the sixth periodic report of Denmark (CEDAW/C/DNK/6), said that Denmark had made great strides towards gender equality, although the Government recognized that much work still lay ahead. In Denmark, gender equality and equal rights for women were perceived as fundamental values and essential elements in a democratic society. Gender equality and women's full participation in society and labour markets were also considered pre-conditions for economic growth. Legislation on gender equality was in place, and the Government always took steps to ensure that new legislation was in accord with the Convention, which was a relevant and applied source of law in Denmark.

3. The Act on Gender Equality was continually being improved. The latest amendment had expanded the Act's rules on the gender composition of boards and committees appointed by ministers. The Danish Parliament had just passed an amendment to the Act on Equal Pay, ordering large companies to compile sex-disaggregated pay statistics. The legislation on equal treatment in the labour market had also been amended recently through the addition of stipulations classifying sexual harassment and bullying as acts of discrimination. The rules on compensation had also been improved. Anyone who felt that he or she was being discriminated against for gender-related reasons could file a complaint with the Gender Equality Board.

4. As the report indicated, Denmark applied a two-pronged approach to promote gender equality: a gender mainstreaming strategy, supplemented by special initiatives focusing on specific challenges. As a result, Danish women enjoyed high educational levels and high labour market participation rates, generous parental leave schemes and publicly subsidized day

care for their children. Nevertheless, as the report also noted, Denmark still faced a number of challenges in relation to gender equality. The Government was working to meet those challenges through various special initiatives, such as campaigns aimed at eliminating prejudice and discriminatory practices among children and young people and a campaign to make migrant women aware of their rights. Other initiatives sought to reduce the gender segregation in the Danish labour market and eliminate the barriers that limited participation by women, particularly migrant women, in both the labour market and the education system.

5. In December 2005, the Government had launched a four-year action plan called "Employment, participation and equal opportunities for all". Its aim was to contribute to the elimination of gender-linked prejudices against women, men, girls and boys in relation to the labour market, the education system and organizations. The plan comprised more than 50 initiatives, including several targeting men and women with non-Danish ethnic backgrounds. The Government also had an action plan to address the serious problem of forced marriage.

6. The issues of trafficking and prostitution were high on the Government's agenda. The Government considered trafficking a modern form of slavery and was working to eliminate it. For three years, it had been carrying out an action plan to prevent trafficking and support victims. The Government had also launched two consecutive action plans to fight violence perpetrated by men against women, with a special focus on violence against migrant women.

7. With regard to women's participation in political decision-making processes, as called for by article 7 of the Convention, efforts were under way to increase the number of women in political posts, particularly at the local level, where only 27 per cent of local council members were women. However, while there had been a slight increase in the number of female councillors, the percentage of female mayors had declined. Work was also in hand to increase the proportion of women in management and in academia. The Government was starting to see the results of its initiatives aimed at persuading businesses of the benefits of having more women in high-level managerial posts, as was outlined in the delegation's communications with the Committee on article 11. In the academic realm, in response to one of the Committee's recommendations

on the fifth periodic report of Denmark (CEDAW/C/DEN/5), the Government had also been focusing on increasing the number of women in top university positions. To that end, it had established a think tank, which had produced a number of recommendations for universities, including a set of management instruments for promoting, recruiting and retaining female talent.

8. The pay gap between men and women was another issue of great concern to the Government. While women and men received the same pay if they performed the same job, very often they did not perform the same jobs. That was largely due to the gender segregation in the labour market. Other explanations included differences in length of service and training. Nevertheless, there was still a 3 to 6 per cent gap which had yet to be explained. As mentioned earlier, recent amendments to the Act on Equal Pay required companies to compile sex-disaggregated payroll statistics. In addition, the Government and its social partners were putting the finishing touches on a guide for companies concerning equal pay.

9. Concluding her statement, she said that the Danish delegation looked forward to an interesting and constructive dialogue with the Committee. She noted that the delegation included representatives of the Home Rule Governments of the Faroe Islands and Greenland, and asked that they be given the opportunity also to make introductory remarks.

10. **Mr. Worm** (Denmark), representative of the Home Rule Government of Greenland, said that gender equality was a fundamental value in the social life and legislation of Greenland. Much of the legislation in Greenland relating to gender equality was identical to Danish legislation. For that reason, the section of the report prepared by Greenland focused on legislation that was specific to Greenland.

11. Each year, the Greenland Gender Equality Council adopted focus areas for its activities. In 2005 and 2006, it had focused on physical and mental violence against women. Activities had included television spots that conveyed the message that violence, in or outside the home, was unacceptable and provided information about violence prevention and victim assistance. Another area of focus was women's participation in public life, for which purpose it had offered several courses designed to provide women

with tools to enable them to take an active role in political bodies, in businesses and in other spheres.

12. Prostitution and trafficking of women were not very prevalent in Greenland. That was probably because of cultural factors and because Greenland, with only 57,000 inhabitants, was such a small and transparent society.

13. As for new initiatives to promote gender equality, the education level in Greenland was generally lower than in Denmark, but the Home Rule authorities had recently launched a comprehensive scheme to improve education for both women and men. It was hoped that, in the long run, those efforts would improve social conditions. The female/male ratio in high schools and institutions of higher learning was currently around 63 to 37.

14. In 2006 the Greenland Parliament had improved the legislation on parental leave, extending the leave period to at least 24 weeks, of which the father was entitled to 6 weeks. The legislation stressed the responsibility of both parents for their children.

15. **Ms. Ellefsen** (Denmark), representative of the Home Rule Government of the Faroe Islands, said that under Faroese legislation men and women had the same rights and responsibilities. As the report indicated, the Faroese Parliament had enacted a law on gender equality in 1994, the principal purpose of which was to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination. Women and men had the same political rights and could hold elected office at all levels of government. Nevertheless, women were in the minority in all political arenas. In the seven ministries in the Faroes, only one of the senior administrator posts was held by a woman. Women were senior administrators in 8 (14 per cent) of the 57 Government agencies or institutions.

16. The Gender Equality Act stipulated that the number of women and men serving on public commissions and councils should be equal, and since the law had entered into force the Gender Equality Commission had worked diligently to ensure that it was being followed. Nevertheless, while the male-female imbalance had decreased, in 2003 there had been 253 men and 164 women serving on public commissions and councils (61 versus 39 per cent). The minister responsible for gender equality had notified the respective political authorities to take the necessary

steps to ensure compliance with the provisions of the law.

17. Work had also focused on encouraging more women to enter political life. For the 2002 parliamentary election, the Gender Equality Commission had taken a leading role in arranging a forum to encourage women to seek election.

18. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) said that it was of crucial importance for the Danish Government to ensure that its legislation was in compliance with international obligations. The Government therefore welcomed the scrutiny of the Committee and the opportunity to discuss the implementation of the obligations enshrined in the Convention. She assured the Committee that its recommendations would be disseminated and thoroughly discussed in Denmark and that their implementation would be carefully considered.

Articles 1 and 2

19. **Ms. Gnacadja** sought clarification regarding implementation of the Convention in the Faroe Islands and Greenland. The report stated that Denmark's ratification included the entire Kingdom of Denmark, of which the Faroe Islands and Greenland were a part. But it also said that Danish legislation on gender equality was not applicable in those two territories, and both the report and the statements by the representatives of the Faroe Islands and Greenland seemed to indicate that their legislation on gender equality differed in some respects from Danish legislation on the subject. She would appreciate it if the delegation could explain how the Convention applied to the Faroe Islands and Greenland, as integral parts of the Kingdom of Denmark, and the differences between their legislation and Danish legislation relating to the provisions of the Convention.

20. **Ms. Simms** also requested clarification regarding application of the Convention to the Faroe Islands and Greenland.

21. **The Chairperson**, speaking as a member of the Committee, asked whether the Danish authorities had discussed and acted on the Committee's previous concluding comments concerning Denmark, with specific reference to ensuring full implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol in the whole country, including the Faroe Islands and Greenland. She also wished to know how the application of

international conventions was organized in the Home Rule territories, how relevant complaints were addressed there, and what were the domestic remedies before referral to the Committee. She asked whether institutional arrangements existed or were contemplated for presenting the periodic reports and the Committee's concluding comments before the Danish Parliament. Despite the Committee's earlier appeal for Denmark to incorporate the Convention into its domestic legal system, according to the report the Danish authorities had decided not to do so. While the Convention itself did not oblige States Parties to take that step, international law required the parties to all ratified international instruments to incorporate them into domestic law, without dictating how that should be done. Since the sixth periodic report stated that Danish laws were in conformity with the provisions of the Convention, it was all the more puzzling that the authorities should have decided not to incorporate the Convention into domestic law.

22. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) said that the Convention was applicable in Greenland but, under Home Rule legislation, Greenland took responsibility for its practical implementation, in which the Danish Government could not interfere.

23. **Mr. Worm** (Denmark) added that, according to a complex legislative arrangement, under the Home Rule legislation Greenland had full legal responsibility to ensure that gender equality was achieved, including implementation of the Convention. In 2003 Greenland had enacted legislation on gender equality, including matters of marriage and partnerships, and some details had been given in the periodic report.

24. **Ms. Ellefsen** (Denmark) said that Mr. Worm's reply also applied to the situation in the Faroe Islands.

25. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) said that the question of incorporating the Convention into Danish domestic legislation had often been discussed at previous meetings with the Committee. The Convention was a legally binding instrument in Denmark and could be and had been invoked in all courts, including the Supreme Court, and in the Gender Equality Board. All new legislation had to be reviewed to ensure that it was in conformity with all ratified international instruments, including the Convention, before enactment. As explained in the report, however, on the recommendation of the Incorporation Committee the

Danish Government had decided not to incorporate the Convention into its domestic legislation.

Articles 3 to 5

26. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling** requested that future periodic reports give more information about the results and impact of national reports and studies, many of which were mentioned in the sixth report, on policy and legislation. She also drew attention to the fact that the revised guidelines issued in June 2006 required the presentation of a core report to all seven United Nations treaty bodies. She welcomed the initiative to attach the comments by Danish NGOs to the periodic report, which met the Committee's desire for greater interaction between governments and NGOs. She remained dissatisfied, however, with the responses given to the questions about Home Rule in Greenland and the Faroe Islands and wanted to know whether a specific mechanism had been set up to ensure that the Convention was implemented in those territories within given time frames, since the Danish Government retained overall responsibility for application of the Convention. She also asked whether all ministries were working towards gender mainstreaming, a statutory requirement in all European Union countries, why the terms of reference issued by the central Government with regard to the recent institutional reforms did not include gender mainstreaming, and whether that would affect women's opportunities to run for political office.

27. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao asked for data on the human and financial resources devoted to gender mainstreaming by the relevant ministries and government departments and for supplementary information about the relationship between the Gender Equality Board and the relevant ministerial offices. With regard to local authorities and the Home Rule territories, were there similar structures there to enhance gender equality? According to the periodic report, an inter-ministerial steering group of senior officials had been created in 2001 to monitor gender mainstreaming and she wondered what the results of its project had been and whether an evaluation was envisaged. The report pointed to relatively slow progress towards gender mainstreaming in some ministries and she wondered what measures were planned to remedy unsatisfactory results.

28. **Ms. Saiga** voiced concern that the reports on the situation in the Home Rule territories were annexed to

the periodic report, suggesting that their status vis-à-vis the Convention was not the same as in the rest of Denmark; a suitable solution would be for the governments of those territories to submit their own reports. She personally was unhappy at the initiative to include the NGO comments in the periodic report, which had required them to be translated into the other official languages at United Nations expense. In future the NGO comments should be submitted separately for informal circulation.

29. Being free of charge and having a more simplified procedure, the Gender Equality Board was presumably more accessible to complainants. She asked how the Board differed in practice from the conventional courts. How many cases went before the Board? How did the authorities assess its activities? Was it possible to appeal against court decisions before the Board and vice versa?

30. **Ms. Gaspar** also requested clarification of how the Convention was implemented and how that implementation was monitored in the Home Rule territories, in view of the fact that Denmark, not those territories, had ratified the Convention. She also wished to know how the policy of gender mainstreaming worked in practice and how it was evaluated. She inquired whether officials such as judges, police officers and ministerial staff were familiar with the Convention. The report made mention of a handbook, containing information on the Convention, but she wondered how it was disseminated and with what outcome. Similarly, did the report on gender equality submitted to the Danish Parliament annually since 2001 inform the Parliament about the Convention and its implementation? If the sixth periodic report had been submitted to the Danish Parliament for discussion, it would be useful for the Committee to be informed of any comments arising from that discussion.

31. She wished to know what human and financial resources the Gender Equality Board enjoyed, how many appeals were submitted to it and how many cases had been examined.

32. Finally, although Danish NGOs had included their comments in the report, none were attending the meeting. She wondered whether that was due to their general satisfaction with Government policy or to a regrettable reduction in the financial aid given to

NGOs by the Danish Government to attend such meetings.

33. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) voiced surprise at the criticism that the report lacked information about results of reports and studies. The results of the Danish Government's policy could be measured in the relative lack of gender discrimination in most areas of life in Denmark. The report contained considerable statistical information about and analysis of the results of reports and studies. She had also conveyed such information in her introductory statement. She asked for clarification of the areas where information about concrete results was lacking.

34. As for the role of NGOs, the Danish Government recognized the need for dialogue while accepting that it was ultimately responsible for implementing the Convention and its objectives. Dialogue with NGOs was successful, in particular in the areas of trafficking and violence against women, and financial support for them had increased over the years. It was important that NGOs be afforded opportunities to criticize Government policy and their travel expenses to international meetings were usually met. Nevertheless, it was important to strike a balance between defending the rights of NGOs and guaranteeing their independence from the Government.

35. With regard to Greenland and the Faroe Islands, the Danish parliamentary committee responsible for ensuring compliance with international treaties also monitored compliance in the Home Rule territories. In accordance with the democratic principle of home rule, those territories were responsible for compliance with all international instruments and were under the same obligations as the national Government.

36. The Department of Gender Equality, of which she was Deputy Permanent Secretary, was answerable to the Minister for Gender Equality who, in turn, came under the authority of a Government ministry, currently the Ministry for Social Affairs. Nevertheless it was an autonomous department. The Department had about 20 staff, most of whom were women, but efforts were under way to recruit more men. It had a budget of 15 million kroner for operational purposes, as well as substantial additional resources for specific initiatives, such as the action plan on violence against women. A report was prepared each year on the results of the Department's overall action plan, which corresponded closely to the objectives set out in the Convention.

37. The Gender Equality Board was an independent body dealing with complaints of discrimination and consisted of a judge and two attorneys with expertise in labour relations and gender equality. It had handled 38 cases in 2005 and 20 in the first half of 2006. The procedure for submitting a complaint through the Gender Equality Board was much simpler than through the courts: for example, complaints could be filed on the Board's website. The Board decided in each case whether or not compensation should be awarded and there was an appeals procedure for complainants not satisfied with a Board decision. Measures were also in place to enforce the payment of compensation by employers or other relevant entities. Complaints were submitted by men and women in roughly equal numbers.

38. Referring to a comment about the new treaty body reporting guidelines, she said that the sixth periodic report had been prepared before the issuance of the new guidelines. However, every effort would be made to ensure that the next report complied with them.

39. Gender mainstreaming was enshrined in Danish law, but practical implementation was a lengthy process. An action plan had therefore been drawn up to ensure gender mainstreaming at all levels of State administration, which was being implemented by a high-level group of senior officials from each ministry. Accurate statistics on women's and men's involvement in various spheres were prepared so as to target mainstreaming efforts effectively. Communication activities were also adapted to cater for differences in men's and women's perceptions. The group cooperated with the Ministry of Finance on budgeting for mainstreaming efforts. Relevant educational activities were also under way within a number of ministries.

40. Certain NGOs had claimed that the Structural Reform Commission had failed to take account of gender mainstreaming in the reorganization of the country's municipalities. That was not the case, although it was true that more work needed to be done in that regard, and a working group had been established for that purpose. Political parties had been requested to increase the number of women candidates for election. Past results had shown a high success rate for women candidates. However, in that regard also, further efforts were needed at the local level.

41. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling**, referring to a question she had previously asked, said that, while the report gave details of the results of various studies, it was not clear how those results were translated into political action. With regard to article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, she asked whether there was an explicit policy for the use of temporary special measures, as outlined in the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, and whether the gender equality policy stipulated equality of results to be achieved, rather than just equality of opportunities and treatment.

42. **Ms. Coker-Appiah**, referring to article 5 of the Convention, said that the report referred to a number of studies but gave no indication of their outcome. For example, an evaluation of the use of assault alarm devices by women at risk of violence had been scheduled for 2004. She would like to know the outcome of that evaluation and, if the devices had proved effective, whether there were plans to increase the number issued. She also wished to know whether the report forming part of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS) had been published in 2004 as planned and what its key findings were. She would also like to know the outcome of the evaluation of counselling centres for victims of crime mentioned in the report, and of the research on violence against women conducted by Greenland in 2001 in cooperation with Iceland and the Faroe Islands.

43. Certain NGOs had expressed concern about the situation of foreign women with time-limited residence permits who left their husbands because of abuse. Such women often found it difficult to obtain permission to stay in Denmark because they lacked knowledge of the applicable law and the procedures to be followed. She asked what steps were being taken to ensure that such women had the information they needed and whether the Government was considering amending the law to ease their situation.

Article 6

44. **Ms. Tan**, noting that the Department of Gender Equality appeared to pay little attention to the issue of prostitution, said that she was particularly alarmed at the existence of a circular providing for disabled people to obtain State help with arrangements for using prostitutes. While efforts to provide assistance to disabled people were laudable, helping them to engage in vice was unacceptable. The circular in question should therefore be revoked and a public statement

issued condemning the exploitation of prostitution. Moreover, legislation designed to protect women against violence should be enforced and other measures against violence, as outlined in the Committee's general recommendations Nos. 12 and 19, should be considered. Prostitutes should also have access to support services to help them find alternatives to prostitution.

45. **Ms. Simms** asked whether the desire to preserve indigenous cultures and to respect minorities was resulting in the persistence of practices that discriminated against women, such as female genital mutilation. With regard to prostitution, she understood that, as part of their training, members of the armed forces were instructed not to use prostitutes when in foreign countries and, in general, not to engage in sexual relations with the local citizenry. She would like to know whether members of the armed forces were also expressly instructed that rape, both of members of the local population in a given foreign country and of Danish nationals in the military, was prohibited.

46. **The Chairperson**, speaking as a member of the Committee, asked whether the national database on violence against women covered Greenland and the Faroe Islands or whether they had separate databases. She requested data on the number of women murdered each year in cases of domestic violence. Noting that 37 shelters were available for women victims of violence, she asked whether that number was found to be sufficient or whether demand for places outstripped supply. She also wished to know whether access to the shelters was free of charge and whether any measures, either voluntary or compulsory, were in place with regard to persons who committed violence against women.

47. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) said that the evaluation of the use of alarm devices by women at risk had revealed that demand was lower than expected. It was hoped that that meant the provision of crisis centres and shelters, together with the support available to women when they moved out of such centres, helped them to feel secure enough not to need the devices.

48. Foreign women who left violent husbands and did have Danish citizenship could obtain a residence permit. However, they were required to provide evidence of abuse, and campaigns were therefore being conducted to raise their awareness of that requirement. In addition, medical professionals and police officers

were being made aware of the need to document domestic violence.

49. With regard to translating the results of studies into specific action, one example was the measures taken to address the gender divide that had been identified in the labour market. Staff in employment centres were being trained not to automatically direct women towards traditionally “female” jobs and men towards traditionally “male” jobs.

50. With regard to temporary special measures, she said that the Gender Equality Act provided for special training courses for both men and women so as to achieve a gender balance in education. For job vacancies, employers could seek applications from persons of one sex if that sex was underrepresented in the field in question. In addition, many initiatives had been introduced to improve the position of women from ethnic minorities.

51. An average of 25 women a year died as a result of domestic violence. With regard to the crisis centres for victims of violence, women did not always find a place in the first centre for which they applied. However, in 98 per cent of cases, it took no more than three applications to find a place. Moreover, a number of additional centres had recently been opened and steps had been taken to improve the quality of their services. In some centres, a small payment was required from women who needed to stay for a prolonged period. However, no one in need was turned away. Other measures against violence included support for NGOs dealing with women victims and help for disabled women who had difficulty reaching a crisis centre. Programmes were also in place to help violent men change their behaviour.

52. **Mr. Worm** (Denmark) said that the precise number of women victims of violence in Greenland was not known because gender-disaggregated statistics were not available. However, there had been 158 cases of rape or attempted rape in Greenland in 2005. Often, those who perpetrated violence were known to their victims, and some came from the victim’s family. Greenland also had crisis centres which took measures against violence and provided counselling to violent men.

53. Under Home Rule, the culture of Greenland was recognized as different from that of Denmark. However, it did not include any practices that violated the Convention. Indeed, the Convention had been

implemented in Greenland’s legislation. However, care would be taken in future reports to clarify any legislative discrepancies.

54. **Ms. Ellefsen** (Denmark) said that 48,000 people lived in the Faroe Islands and it had one crisis centre in Tórshavn, established in 1988. It was funded by the Government but women paid if they could and if their stay was lengthy. The centre had been used by 20 women in 2005. There had been no murders of women in the Faroe Islands in nearly 20 years. The results of the research on violence against women conducted by Greenland in cooperation with the Faroe Islands and Iceland had not yet been published.

55. **Mr. Kromann** (Denmark) said the results of the International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS) published in 2004 indicated that the number of women exposed to violence had decreased. More women exposed to violence were filing police reports. Compared to women in other countries surveyed, Danish women were exposed less to physical violence from a partner. When violence originated with a non-partner, Danish women were at the same level of exposure to physical violence as some of the other countries.

56. Overall, users and volunteers were satisfied with the victim counselling centres established in 1997. Still, there were some areas that needed improvement, in particular strengthening the relationship between the police and volunteer counsellors, and police counselling of victims. The Ministry of Justice was preparing guidelines on the role of police in victim counselling and would provide more detailed information on compensation for victims, which had been sparse.

57. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) said that victims of violence also had access to 24-hour counselling services, crisis centres and victims networks.

58. The Government did not consider cultural tradition justification for not adhering to the Convention.

59. Prostitution was viewed as a serious social problem connected to drug use and economic hardship. Competency centres and street teams had been set up to inform prostitutes of their rights and alternatives, and to gather data to better address the issue. Prostitutes were given access to education, psychological care and training in other occupations.

Since prostitution was legal in Denmark, disabled prostitutes were given the same 24-hour assistance as other disabled persons.

60. There was a code of conduct for the military that set forth clear guidelines on sexual conduct, including the categorical prohibition of rape, the penalty for which was immediate demobilization for trial and sentencing. There were no incidents of Danish soldiers involved in rape or other sexual harassment. Guidelines had been established to address offensive behaviour. The Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs had drafted a joint action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, including consequences for the military.

61. **The Chairperson** invited follow-up questions on articles 1 to 6.

62. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling** asked, in reference to general recommendation No. 25, whether there were directives to the public and private sectors preferring women for promotion or hire if there were equal numbers of equally qualified men and women. Was there a thorough impact analysis of how social services to women would change before structural reforms to municipalities took place?

63. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao asked whether the Department of Gender Equality was part of the Ministry of Social Affairs. She noted NGO reports annexed to the Government report and wondered, as 50 per cent of prostitutes in Denmark were foreign and there was little support for them, what comments the Government had on the NGO reports and what measures it had implemented to help prostitutes, in particular those who were foreign?

64. **The Chairperson**, speaking as a member of the Committee, wondered how the Optional Protocol was integrated into the national legislative system. How would a case violating human rights be handled under the Optional Protocol? Was the definition of discrimination in Denmark in line with article 1 of the Convention? Since gender equality laws were different in Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, did they all comply with the Convention?

65. **Ms. Simms** asked whether the foreign women trafficked into Denmark were trafficked only for prostitution, or also for domestic work and whether border controls existed. The report mentioned problems

faced by foreign women in particular in terms of prostitution and HIV infection, but was relatively silent about racially diverse Danish citizens. How many Danish citizens had been arrested for trafficking in women?

66. **Ms. Abel** (Denmark) said that there was no obligation to hire the least represented sex. An analysis had found that expanding municipalities would improve services for women.

67. The Department of Gender Equality was part of the Ministry of Equality because it was too small to function as an independent ministry.

68. There had been serious efforts to address the serious problem of trafficking in women, who were trafficked for prostitution, not for domestic work. There were no border controls in Denmark. However, airport and police personnel had been trained to identify women who could be potential victims of trafficking. There were shelters, hotlines and street workers helping women to remove themselves from situations of trafficking. Action plans had been expanded to include women under 18 years of age. Women could be in a shelter for 30 days or longer if needed, and were given safe transit, if they wished to return to their countries of origin.

69. Trafficking in women was being addressed internationally through cooperation with NGOs and other Nordic countries. During Denmark's Presidency, the issue had been high on the agenda of the European Union. Trafficking existed because of the economic situations in the countries of origin of the victims; therefore financial inequities had to be corrected at the international level.

70. It was not her intention to give the impression that foreign women were problematic. However, statistics confirmed greater incidence of HIV among ethnic minorities and therefore initiatives had targeted ethnic minority populations.

71. Application of the Optional Protocol had not been necessary; as stated in the Optional Protocol, domestic remedies first had to be exhausted.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.