



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

Distr.: General  
6 July 2022

Original: English

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Eighty-second session

### Summary record of the 1892nd meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 21 June 2022, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Narain (Rapporteur)

## Contents

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

*Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Morocco*

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

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

*Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Morocco (CEDAW/C/MAR/5-6; CEDAW/C/MAR/Q/5-6; CEDAW/C/MAR/RQ/5-6)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Morocco joined the meeting.*
2. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco), introducing her country's combined fifth and sixth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/MAR/5-6), said that the report had been drawn up in consultation with a wide range of government bodies, national institutions and civil society organizations in accordance with the guidelines for the preparation of reports to the treaty bodies by Member States. The Government had managed to tackle the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic by adopting an approach that addressed not only the medical aspects of the pandemic but also its social and economic consequences. The country's system of integrated health and social care had provided free health care to all citizens and financial support for vulnerable groups, including women in difficult situations.
3. In order to strengthen social protection, plans were in place to establish a unified social register containing economic and social data that would facilitate access to financial support and social services for vulnerable persons. The Government had developed a global vision based on the establishment of a strong, inclusive and sustainable economy that took into account the aspirations of women as active participants in global development. It regularly monitored the progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and took account of the recommendations made by the National Commission on Sustainable Development, which had met in April 2022 to assess the progress made towards achieving the goals. Aware of the importance of strengthening women's resilience, the Government had committed itself to implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. In that connection, it had launched the country's first National Action Plan on Women and Peace and Security in March 2022.
4. Morocco was a founding member of the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls, which had been launched in response to the alarming rise in domestic violence around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. On 22 April 2022, the Government had deposited instruments of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention and the two optional protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The country had received visits from the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls in 2012 and the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, in 2013.
5. Numerous legislative measures had been taken to promote gender equality and combat gender-based discrimination. In that regard, the Government had made amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure and adopted laws on combating violence against women and protecting domestic workers. Gender-sensitive budgeting had been introduced with a view to promoting women's socioeconomic empowerment.
6. In 2021, the Government had adopted a series of laws to increase the representation of women in the House of Representatives, local government bodies and professional chambers. The adoption of special temporary measures for elections had brought about a significant increase in the number of women elected to provincial councils. The number of women elected to the House of Representatives had also increased between 2016 and 2021.
7. The Government had conducted training sessions on women's leadership and gender equality in public services, helping to bring about a significant improvement in women's representation in the public sector. Between 2012 and 2021, the percentage of public sector employees who were women had risen from 38.6 per cent to 42 per cent while the percentage of senior managers who were women had risen from 10.38 per cent to 18.52 per cent. The number of women occupying ministerial positions within the Government had risen significantly since 2016 and a national council for the protection of women's rights had been established.

8. The Government had adopted Act No. 19.20, which provided for the establishment of mandatory quotas for women on the boards of joint-stock companies. As a result, the percentage of board members of companies listed on the capital market who were women was expected to reach at least 30 per cent by 2024 and 40 per cent by 2027. Article 27 of Act No. 50.21 established that gender parity must be observed when appointing the governing bodies of public institutions and enterprises. A new system for collecting and analysing data had been developed with a view to enhancing protection for women's rights at the local level. On 9 June 2022, the Government had adopted a decree promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.

9. In order to combat poverty, ensure a decent standard of living for all citizens and promote women's socioeconomic empowerment, including in rural areas, the Government had launched the National Human Development Initiative, the Green Morocco Plan, the Rural Development Fund and the Green Generation agricultural strategy for the period 2020–2030. In recent years, basic health-care coverage had been extended to an additional 22 million persons, average life expectancy had increased and the maternal and child mortality rates had fallen. Financial assistance was provided to retirees who had no workplace pension and measures had been taken to compensate persons who had lost their jobs. Under the Social Dialogue Agreement of 2022, the minimum wage system had been unified across different sectors and men employed in the public sector had acquired the right to take 15 days' paternity leave.

10. Following a large-scale national discussion involving State agencies, civil society organizations and partners, Act No. 103-13 on combating violence against women had entered into force in September 2018, affording women a significantly higher level of protection against gender-based violence. Unified standards on support services for women victims of violence had been adopted and a number of measures had been taken to prevent child marriage, including measures to help girls remain in school. The Government had adopted a strategic vision for educational reform that would promote good schooling, equality of opportunity and the universal right to education for all children. Between 2019 and 2021, the proportion of girls enrolled at all levels of the school system had increased.

11. **A representative of Morocco**, speaking as a member of the National Human Rights Council, said that the Council had launched a nationwide campaign to encourage victims of gender-based violence to report offences to the authorities. The Council strengthened the capacities of civil society organizations so that they were better able to respond to complaints of gender-based violence and discrimination. It also facilitated women's access to justice, challenged bills that contained discriminatory provisions, held workshops and studied good practices.

12. The Council welcomed the Government's decision to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention and adopt laws to protect the rights of women and girls, including laws on combating discrimination in elections and violence against women. However, further efforts would have to be made in order to end child marriage, challenge traditional discriminatory practices and stereotypes and enhance women's participation in political life. The Government was far from achieving its goal of gender equality, particularly with respect to the number of women in elected office, as had been shown by the general elections in 2021. The Council recommended that the Government accede to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and adopt a law that clearly defined gender-based discrimination and violence and set out punishments for those offences. The Government should also adopt a specific law prohibiting early marriage. Furthermore, it should ensure that the gender perspective was mainstreamed into all State projects and programmes. The Council also recommended a review of the Criminal Code with a view to removing all provisions that discriminated against women, providing women with greater access to justice, and ensuring that offences against them did not go unpunished. In that connection, the courts should adopt international standards on the burden of proof in cases involving gender-based violence.

#### *Articles 1–6*

13. **Ms. Toé-Bouda** said that she welcomed the progress made towards the achievement of gender equality in Morocco, including the decisions to raise the minimum legal age for

marriage, prohibit gender-based discrimination, adopt a law on combating violence against women and enshrine the principle of gender equality in the Family Code. She was also gratified to note that the Constitution provided for the primacy of international treaties ratified by Morocco over national laws. Despite the progress made, the Committee noted that a number of fundamental women's rights continued to be violated in Morocco. It was those areas of concern that would form the basis of the discussion.

14. **Ms. Gabr** said that the Committee welcomed the action taken by the State party since its previous report to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. In particular, the State party was to be commended for adopting the Constitution of 2011, under which discrimination against women had been prohibited in all its forms, and for the various measures it had taken to incorporate that principle into national legislation. She wished to know whether parliamentarians had engaged in public dialogues on new legislation and whether specific activities were carried out in rural areas to raise awareness of legislative reforms.

15. The Committee would welcome clarification as to what the State party had meant by asserting in its replies to the list of issues that its declarations relating to article 2 and article 15 (4) of the Convention did not exclude, amend or restrict the legal effect of the relevant provisions because the rights of women under national law had broken the bounds of a number of those declarations. She wondered whether that meant that the State party had given consideration to withdrawing those declarations.

16. She would appreciate an account of the steps taken leading up to the State party's accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. She wished to know whether a mechanism had been set up to review national legislation in order to ensure that it was compatible with international conventions and treaties.

17. She also wished to know whether the legislative amendments that had been made to promote women's rights had had a positive impact on women's access to justice. It would be interesting to learn whether the State party had taken specific measures to implement the recommendations contained in the Committee's general comment No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice ([CEDAW/C/GC/33](#)). It was not clear whether judges, prosecutors and other members of the judiciary were aware of the barriers that women faced in gaining access to justice. Additional information on the measures in place to overcome such barriers and facilitate access to justice would be welcome.

18. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that she wished to emphasize that the Constitution of 2011 affirmed the primacy of international conventions to which Morocco was a party over the national law of the country.

19. **A representative of Morocco**, speaking as a member of the National Human Rights Council, said that Morocco had made its reservations and declarations concerning the Convention in accordance with the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. The two declarations still in effect rendered certain provisions of the Convention null and void under national law. For example, the provisions of article 2 must be without prejudice to certain requirements under the Constitution. In addition, they must not conflict with the country's traditions having to do with personal status or the sharia.

20. Morocco had extensive experience with the individual complaints and inquiry procedures under international treaty bodies. The Government had set up a national authority to monitor the drafting of communications and to coordinate all actions taken by the State in relation to those cases. The Government was aware of the need to provide ongoing capacity-building activities for the experts involved in such procedures.

21. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that the Government was conscious that it needed to do more to inform the public about the country's accession to the Optional Protocol. It was working closely with the National Human Rights Council in that regard and had made plans to organize a dedicated national day of awareness-raising activities on the subject.

22. **A representative of Morocco** said that the Ministry of Justice had taken extensive action to ensure that justice facilities were accessible to everyone in Morocco. For example, public prosecutor's offices had been opened in rural areas and measures had been taken to make courts more accessible for persons with disabilities. The Ministry had also opened 144

offices to provide support to women seeking judicial advice or legal information. Around a quarter of those offices were located in rural areas and the Ministry had made over 7,000 female civil servants responsible for bringing assistance to women in the most isolated regions of the country. Specific support units had been set up to assist female victims of violence, and judges at courts of appeal and courts of first instance had all received training on cases involving violence against women. In general, the Ministry of Justice made every effort to publish information in both Arabic and French and to make all legal information and documentation available to consult for free on its website.

23. **A representative of Morocco** said that the Government had made a determined effort in recent years to strengthen knowledge and understanding of women's rights issues among members of the judiciary. For example, in 2019, over 250 magistrates had received training on the subject of violence against women. Between 2019 and 2021, over 400 judges had been trained on human trafficking and around 600 judges had been trained on issues relating to early marriage.

24. Her Government had been working with the Council of Europe, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to develop awareness-raising activities related to implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol. Measures had been taken to make training materials on those instruments available on digital platforms and members of the judiciary had been sent templates of individual communications. The State had also organized national days dedicated to issues affecting women such as violence against women, early marriage and human trafficking. As part of those activities, awareness-raising materials had been sent to media outlets and national television channels.

25. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that an announcement had been recently published in the Official Gazette concerning the creation of the National Commission for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The Commission was chaired by the Prime Minister and composed of a number of officials from the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development and representatives of civil society and the private sector.

26. **Ms. Gabr** said that she wished to know whether the Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority was fully operational. She would also welcome further information on its budget and the way in which it interacted with similar national human rights mechanisms, in particular the recently formed National Commission for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. It would be useful to hear more about the specific role of those bodies since the proliferation of human rights mechanisms sometimes led to overlapping of responsibilities. She wished to know what role the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development played in ensuring effective coordination between the different mechanisms. The Committee would be particularly interested to know which body was responsible for devising new strategies on gender parity and ensuring that they were adequately funded. She also wished to know what role, if any, was played by civil society organizations and the media in the awareness-raising activities that the delegation had mentioned.

27. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that, in recent years, significant progress had been made in improving the coordination of work carried out by the different human rights mechanisms in Morocco. The Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority was an independent constitutional body that was tasked with working at all levels of society to fight discrimination and to promote women's rights. The National Commission for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, on the other hand, was composed of a number of government representatives and was responsible for implementing road maps on women's empowerment.

28. **A representative of Morocco** said that the Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority had been established in 2017 following the enactment of legislation that had been drafted in consultation with civil society. The Authority enjoyed budgetary and administrative independence in line with the Paris Principles. It was composed of 124 members including representatives of civil society organizations and trade unions, experts on women's rights and entrepreneurs. The work of the Authority was complementary with that of other national human rights mechanisms and, thanks to the diverse nature of its

membership, it was fully equipped to propose relevant legislative amendments designed to promote substantive gender parity and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

29. **Ms. Ameline** said that, in accordance with article 4 of the Convention, States parties were encouraged to use temporary special measures to accelerate the attainment of full gender equality. There were various areas where the strategic use of such measures could make a real difference to the economic, political, social and cultural situation faced by women in Morocco. For example, she wished to know whether the State party would consider creating a special fund to support women's entrepreneurship or taking measures to promote the economic empowerment of young women in rural areas. It would also be interesting to hear whether the State party would envisage taking action to ensure that highly qualified female engineers were offered employment opportunities in the green and blue economies. Clearly defined goals and time frames needed to be integrated into such measures, and specific performance indicators should be created to facilitate monitoring and evaluation.

30. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that the Government had established a number of programmes aimed at increasing the economic participation of women. One such programme had been set up to provide support for entrepreneurship to 10,000 people. Under a separate employment creation programme, the Government had targeted the creation of 125,000 new jobs in both 2022 and 2023. The Government had made it a priority to ensure that an equal number of men and women benefited from the opportunities created under those programmes.

31. Sustainable development was at the heart of all the Government's policies. Under a new green strategy, it aimed to provide support to 36,000 women, including a significant number of women in rural areas. The goal of the strategy was not just to promote women's empowerment through access to the labour market but to help them to develop the leadership skills that they would require to generate their own employment opportunities in the future. Digitization was another key theme. A specific digital platform had been launched to promote women's empowerment and measures had been taken to digitize the services provided at the support centres run by the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development. There were currently 4,200 centres spread throughout the territory and they had already provided support to over half a million people. The target had been set to reach 2 million people over the coming four years, with a particular focus on women in rural areas.

32. Lastly, as the former chairperson of a university, she was proud that Morocco ranked so highly in its region with regard to numbers of qualified female engineers. However, many such skilled young women still had trouble finding jobs. To assist them, the Government was in the process of formulating a new family strategy that would offer improved public childcare services.

33. **Ms. Gabr** said that she would appreciate confirmation as to whether the Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority was fully independent, in accordance with the 2011 Constitution. She wondered what the relationship was between the Authority and the National Committee for Gender Equality and Women's Advancement, and which body was responsible for drawing up plans to promote women's rights.

34. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that the Gender Parity and Anti-Discrimination Authority was a fully independent and pluralistic mechanism established under the Constitution. Plans to create the National Committee for Gender Equality and Women's Advancement had been delayed for several years owing to a change of government and the COVID-19 pandemic, among other factors. The National Committee would become operational in the coming weeks.

35. **Ms. Ameline** said that a preferential appointment system for women might be useful for the State party as a temporary special measure to boost women's participation, especially as part of the Government's decentralization process. She wished to know whether the National Committee would be tasked with coordinating public policies on the gender aspect of sustainable development.

36. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that the National Committee would be involved in deciding whether a preferential appointment system or other temporary special measures should be introduced. The Minister for Energy Transition and Sustainable Development was

a member of the National Committee and also sat on the National Committee for Sustainable Development, which played a key role in coordinating the country's sustainable development policies.

37. **A representative of Morocco** said that the National Action Plan for Democracy and Human Rights had been developed in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders and contained a range of measures to protect women's rights. Many civil society organizations had been involved in the implementation of initiatives to raise awareness of women's rights under the National Action Plan and had participated meaningfully in discussions on Family Code reform. Reports had been drafted in cooperation with such organizations on the implementation of the National Action Plan.

38. **Ms. Hayar** (Morocco) said that every year, the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development held an award ceremony for excellence in promoting women's rights. In 2022, the theme of the award was women in sustainable development.

39. **A representative of Morocco** said that the Government had adopted a range of measures to ensure the participation of women. Article 27 of Framework Act No. 50-21 on the reform of public enterprises and institutions established the principle of gender parity when appointing members of the governing body of any public enterprise or institution, in line with article 19 of the Constitution, and Regulatory Act No. 02-12 concerning senior posts and its implementing decree required half of all high-ranking government positions to be held by women. The Government had invested in capacity-building for women in positions of responsibility across all regions of the country.

40. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to know when the State party would incorporate specific provisions to combat domestic violence and marital rape into national legislation, including the Criminal Code, and what steps the Government had taken to prevent harmful gender stereotypes in the media, including social media. He wondered whether the country's criminal or civil law provided for specific penalties for offences involving economic, psychological, physical and sexual violence against women. If so, it would be useful to have data on the enforcement of such penalties. He would appreciate information about laws preventing child and informal marriage and the measures that had been taken to prevent femicide.

41. He would be interested to hear what steps had been taken to resolve problems associated with the registration and investigation of complaints received by the hotline for women victims of violence. It would be helpful to know what measures were in place to ensure that the law enforcement agencies respected the privacy of victims of violence and the confidentiality of their complaints so as not to dissuade women from reporting acts of violence. Lastly, he asked whether compensation and financial support was provided to victims of violence when the perpetrator was unable to provide such compensation.

42. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen** said that 441 victims of human trafficking had been identified in 2020, according to the Trafficking in Persons Report of the United States Government. She wished to know whether that number corresponded to victims who had been formally identified and, if so, what the process of formal identification entailed. She would be interested to hear how many of the female victims identified were children and for what purpose they had been trafficked, and whether victims of sexual exploitation had access to health-care services, including abortion. An explanation of the disparity between the number of Moroccan victims – 426 according to the Trafficking in Persons Report – and the relatively few Moroccan perpetrators, who numbered 28 according to the State party's replies to the list of issues ([CEDAW/C/MAR/RQ/5-6](#), para. 103), would be welcome. Given that migrant women were particularly vulnerable to trafficking, she wondered how the Government might account for the fact that so few had been identified.

43. Noting that the children of trafficked people from sub-Saharan Africa were often forced into begging, she would like to know whether the State party identified or registered such children as victims of trafficking. Were they included in a different data set? She would be interested to learn what the outcome had been for Morocco of the joint programme launched by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the European Union to dismantle criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking in North Africa.

44. **A representative of Morocco** said that Act 103-13 criminalized all forms of violence against women, including psychological, physical and economic violence. Husbands who raped their wives were liable to be prosecuted under the Act. The Ministry of Justice was working with the Ministry of Labour on proposed amendments to contradictory or unclear law provisions covering such matters. To ensure access to justice, departments dealing with violence against women appointed social workers to support victims and offered legal advice throughout the litigation process.

45. The National Committee for Preventing Human Trafficking and Coordinating Anti-Trafficking Measures was headed by the Minister of Justice and was comprised of representatives from various ministries. It had begun assessing human trafficking and its impact across Morocco in 2019, and had identified just over 130 victims of trafficking in 2020. The Committee had launched various awareness-raising programmes, set up a hotline to receive complaints and provided all its members with training on the fight against human trafficking. Law enforcement officers had been given training on how to identify trafficking victims and bring perpetrators to justice in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, including government agencies and non-governmental organizations. By law, the State was responsible for providing psychosocial support and compensation to victims of trafficking. Foreign victims did not face discrimination in terms of support and were not subject to deportation. All victims had access to free legal aid provided by the State and were exempt from litigation costs.

46. **A representative of Morocco** said that the definition of violence had been extended to cover online violence. Campaigns had been carried out to raise awareness of gender-based violence among members of the judiciary and data, including statistics, were currently being collected and compiled to measure the progress that had been made within the legal system. Leaflets were published to raise awareness of women who were potentially at risk of violence and facilitate their access to justice. A publication had been published in cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights containing judgments and punishments in cases ranging from harassment to rape as examples of best practice for judges. A programme had been carried out to raise awareness among members of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies, including the Royal Gendarmerie, and to improve care and facilitate access to social and legal protection and assistance for women victims of violence nationwide. The Government was evaluating the services offered to victims of violence and human trafficking with a view to improving them in the future.

47. The Government had introduced a number of judicial reforms to tackle the phenomenon of early marriage. Studies had been conducted to determine the scale of the issue and identify its underlying causes. A consultative process had been undertaken with all relevant stakeholders, including social workers, on measures to raise awareness of early marriage among the general public and reintegrate girls who had been subjected to early or forced marriage into the education system. Measures had been adopted to ensure that judges respected legal precedent according to which marriage should never be permitted for children under 17 years of age.

48. **A representative of Morocco** said that the Ministry of Justice was working on a bill that would allow Morocco to comply with its international obligations while respecting society's views vis-à-vis abortion. The Ministry was also considering proposing a legislative amendment to increase the minimum age for marriage, require medical certification for marriage for anyone under 18 years of age and instruct judges to take into account the age difference between spouses before authorizing such marriages.

49. **Mr. Safarov**, noting the importance of legislative change in areas including definitions of gender-based violence and marital rape, asked what punishment was provided for by the Criminal Code for polygamy and forced marriage.

50. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen** said that she would appreciate clarification of the discrepancy between the number of victims of trafficking in persons indicated by the delegation and that obtained from other sources. Perhaps the number indicated by the delegation referred only to those victims that had been formally identified by the judicial authorities? Nevertheless, the number appeared to include only five foreign victims. It would

be useful to have more detailed information on the share of perpetrators of trafficking in the country who were foreign nationals.

51. **Ms. Toé-Bouda** asked whether marital rape was a criminal offence, and if so, under which legal provision.

52. **A representative of Morocco** said that marital rape was an offence under article 486 of the Criminal Code, which prohibited all non-consensual sexual relations, including those between spouses, and courts had handed down decisions based on that article. A total of 131 victims of trafficking had been identified, which included minors and foreigners. The perpetrators of trafficking consisted of 56 women and 82 men, 13 of whom were foreigners. Under article 40 of the Family Code a woman was entitled to stipulate in her marriage contract that she did not accept polygamy; those responsible for drawing up the contract were required to make women aware of that possibility.

53. **A representative of Morocco** said that in the general framework of combating violence against women, efforts were made to implement Act No. 103-13. The Act required the submission of regular reports on women's access to justice and was intended to provide a long-term overview of progress achieved. A ministerial study had been drawn up to assess the implementation of the Act and assess its ability to provide effective protection to women who were victims of violence. The study's results, which would be available in the coming weeks, would enable the corresponding strategy to be adjusted.

#### *Articles 7–9*

54. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that while progress had been made, including the election of nearly twice as many women to local government in 2015 compared to 2009, and the introduction of a mechanism to increase the representation of women under Regulatory Act 28-11 (2011) of the Chamber of Councillors, women were still underrepresented in local, regional, federal political positions. In 2020 the State party had been ranked 123 out of 153 countries on women's political participation. She wished to know what specific measures were being taken to increase women's political participation in the next legislative and local elections. She would also appreciate information on what was being done to combat rigid gender stereotypes, which were one of the obstacles to women's political participation. As those obstacles were compounded for women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons, she wished to know what steps were being taken to facilitate their participation in public and political life. While she had noted the quantitative changes outlined in connection with the National Administrative Reform Plan 2018–2021 aimed at institutionalizing gender equality in the public service, she would appreciate more information on structural reforms, including details of any support given to women in senior positions, such as childcare, parental leave and support for pregnant women. She wished to know to what extent the gender approach to community development plans introduced under Law No. 78-00 and the gender-disaggregated database established by the Civil Service Gender-based Approach Observatory had contributed to increasing women's participation in civil and public life. She would also like to know whether the State party envisaged amending Regulatory Act No. 02-12 related to appointments to senior positions, which did not appear to contain any specific requirements to achieve the goal of gender parity. Information on planned measures to increase the number of women judges and women ambassadors would be appreciated. She also wished to know how the 2021 legislation on women's representation in public limited companies would work in practice.

55. **Ms. Narain** said that she would like to know what measures the State party was taking to inform the public, and especially rural women, about the right of women to confer their nationality to their children. Was it possible, after the Nationality Code was amended in 2007, to retroactively acquire or apply for Moroccan citizenship by descent from a Moroccan mother? She wished to know the precise content of the bill amending article 10 of the Nationality Code that was introduced in 2017 and whether it purported to give Moroccan women the right to confer nationality to their non-citizen spouse on an equal basis with men. What was the current status of the bill, and the proposed timeline for its enactment? She would appreciate clarification of the content and scope of article 19.3 of the Nationality Code, which appeared to provide that Moroccan women lost their citizenship when they married a foreign citizen and, as a result of their marriage, acquired the nationality of their husband.

She wished to know whether Moroccan women had the same right as men to retain their original nationality in the event of acquisition of another nationality through marriage. Were women supposed to renounce their original nationality if they acquired their foreign spouse's nationality through marriage? She would like to know whether the State party planned to amend that provision, in order to establish equal conditions for men and women in that regard. She also wished to know whether the State party planned to ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. How were children born in Morocco to stateless persons dealt with? Noting reports that 6 per cent of births remained unregistered, she would appreciate information on how the State party ensured that all births were registered.

56. **Ms. Hayar (Morocco)** said that it was important to work not only to promote women's empowerment but also the advancement of women in leadership positions. For that purpose, the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco offered online training and courses in the form of videos to women – including illiterate women, to facilitate their participation in public life and leadership positions. Support to pregnant women and women with young children to enable them to continue work in senior posts was provided under the national project to reform the social protection system. The new family policy under development would seek to provide for maternal and paternal leave in both the public and private sector.

57. **A representative of Morocco** said that legislative measures had been undertaken to ensure women's representation on councils and their political participation at the local and national levels, with the aim of bolstering positive discrimination mechanisms. Those measures had had a positive impact, allowing women to be included in electoral lists at local and legislative elections, with a quota of almost 50 per cent. Financial allocations had been granted to the support fund for projects proposed by political parties and civil society organizations to increase women's participation in municipal councils and professional chambers. Financial assistance had also been provided to support campaigns monitored by political parties. To strengthen women's capacity and abilities there was a plan to guarantee coordination between local representatives in Morocco with those in other African countries. An employment plan for women also existed. Those policies had made it possible for women to participate in public life. In the most recent elections, there had been a rise in the number of women elected to legislative councils; there were 81 women in 2016 and 96 in 2021. The results of the elections for representatives of trade unions had risen by 25 per cent.

58. **A representative of Morocco** said that the legislative and institutional measures implemented to strengthen women's abilities had led to an increase in the number of women in senior public posts, particularly at regional level. Training had been given to women to improve even further on the progress made.

59. **Ms. Hayar (Morocco)** said that while there was no discrimination against women with disabilities in the labour market, 30 per cent of those women were unemployed. Some 36,000 women with disabilities had benefited from a government-funded programme to guarantee the empowerment of women and support entrepreneurship projects of women with disabilities.

60. **A representative of Morocco** said that the number of women judges, which stood at 25 per cent, was gradually increasing. There was no discrimination against women in that regard, and women worked in judicial bodies on an equal footing with men, including at senior level.

61. **A representative of Morocco** said that there was nothing to prevent children from obtaining the nationality of their father or mother, and Moroccan nationals could also transmit their nationality to a foreign spouse. A bill had been prepared to amend the Nationality Act that would grant Moroccan spouses the right to transmit their nationality to a foreign spouse.

62. **Ms. Hayar (Morocco)** said that women ambassadors accounted for 31 per cent of all diplomats.

63. **A representative of Morocco** said that legislation regulating the audiovisual sector helped to combat the propagation of gender stereotypes in the media, and a code of ethics governed journalistic practice in radio and television. Penalties were provided for in the event of breaches of that legislation, including confiscation of journalists' press cards, fines and

withdrawal of publications' funding. In 2021, some 36 licences had been withdrawn for six months from online news journals that discriminated against women. Women were represented at senior levels in the audiovisual sector, constituting for example 11 per cent of directors of publications. Financial assistance was provided with the aim of increasing women's participation, and information sessions were given to journalists to raise their awareness of the relevant legislation and guides.

64. **A representative of Morocco** said that in 2017, 2018 and 2019 the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication had imposed penalties on public and private media outlets for propagating gender stereotypes, which had included the suspension of programmes or channels and public warnings. Awareness-raising seminars were held for journalists, based on studies conducted by the High Authority, with the aim of combating gender stereotypes. Quarterly reports representing women's views on media-related issues were drawn up and consolidated into annual reports sent to associations, trade unions and political parties, which helped to change mindsets and show women in leadership positions.

65. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that her specific question had related to the obstacles to participation in public and political life of marginalized groups, including not only women with disabilities but also lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons, particularly bearing in mind the requests from civil society organizations to repeal article 489 of the Criminal Code.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*