



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Summary record of the 1882nd meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 14 June 2022, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Acosta Vargas

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

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

Eighth periodic report of Türkiye (CEDAW/C/TUR/8; CEDAW/C/TUR/Q/8; CEDAW/C/TUR/RQ/8)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Türkiye joined the meeting.*
2. **Ms. Yanık** (Türkiye), introducing her country's eighth periodic report (CEDAW/C/TUR/8), said that human rights in Türkiye were protected by solid constitutional principles. In particular, the principle of equality was recognized in the Constitution and in laws relating to the rights of women and persons with disabilities. Since 2012, the Ombudsman's Office had included a woman Ombudsman who was responsible for protecting the rights of women and children. In 2016, the Human Rights and Equality Institution had been established as an independent body responsible for combating discrimination.
3. The Government was currently implementing the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment 2018–2023. Steps were being taken to assess the progress achieved in the areas of education, economics, health, the media and the participation of women in decision-making processes. The National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women was periodically updated. All State agencies acted in accordance with the principle of zero tolerance for violence against women and public prosecutors responded urgently to any reports of hate crimes or offences involving discrimination. The possibility of applying to the European Court of Human rights was open to all victims after domestic remedies had been exhausted.
4. In 2021, a parliamentary committee had been established to conduct research into all forms of violence against women. It had subsequently drawn up a report on its findings for discussion in the parliament. The Criminal Code had been amended to improve efforts to combat and deter violence against women. The punishments for offences against women, including murder, assault, torture and threats of violence, had been increased and stalking was now a separate offence. Free legal assistance had been made available to women victims of violence.
5. An annual plan on combating violence against women had been established for 2022. Under the plan, provincial action plans had been established in the country's 81 provinces, risk analysis was used to manage cases involving violence against women, a study of the effectiveness of electronic bracelets had been completed, the number and capacity of violence prevention and monitoring centres had been increased and targets related to the provision of specialist services in women's shelters had been achieved. As part of efforts to combat violence against women, a risk analysis module had been incorporated into the data system of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services and all reports of such violence were followed up. Consideration was being given to the ways in which social services could work with offenders to break cycles of violence.
6. The Government was aware that its decision to withdraw from the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) was controversial. Following the withdrawal, different tools and methods were being used to achieve the goal of eradicating gender-based violence but the Government's determination to achieve that goal had not diminished. Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women was still in force and the Human Rights Action Plan published in March 2021 included the goal of increasing the effectiveness of measures to combat domestic violence and violence against women. Among the targets set with respect to that goal was to extend the increased penalties for offences involving spouses to include former spouses.
7. Women staying in shelters for victims of violence received psychosocial, legal and medical support while their children benefited from free childcare and counselling services. A total of 149 women's shelters around the country had the capacity to host 3,624 women. Shelters affiliated with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services had provided

services to around 84,000 people in 2021. Violence prevention and monitoring centres provided shelter, temporary financial aid, counselling services, childcare, legal assistance, medical support and educational scholarships and materials to victims of violence and their children throughout the country. Such centres had provided support to over 295,000 persons in 2021.

8. Under the Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women, women refugees and asylum-seekers who were victims of violence were granted access to protective and preventive services. All victims of violence, irrespective of their status or nationality, were entitled to the services provided by women's shelters and violence prevention and monitoring centres. Protected persons living in fear for their life were entitled to change their identity. Focal points on combating violence had been established in over 380 social service centres to facilitate victims' access to support at the local level.

9. Technical devices and systems, including electronic bracelets for perpetrators of violence, were used to protect women. Helplines provided round-the-clock support to women and child victims, or potential victims, of violence. During the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, victims of violence were able to obtain immediate assistance by pressing a designated button on the helpline. Support services had now been made available through WhatsApp and the Turkish messaging application BiP.

10. Efforts were being made to increase the capacity of specialized units responsible for combating violence. In that connection, courts empowered to issue injunctions had been established to deal with cases falling within the scope of Law No. 6284. With the expansion of domestic violence investigation offices, which reported to the chief prosecution services in all 81 provinces, investigations were carried out by public prosecutors dedicated to dealing with such cases. Judicial Support and Victim Service Directorates had been established in over 160 courthouses for vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons. Special interview rooms had been introduced throughout the country to provide a safe space for victims of sexual and domestic violence to give their testimony.

11. As of May 2022, over 700,000 people had benefited from seminars on financial literacy and women's economic empowerment. Under the project to promote female students' participation in engineering professions, support was provided to upper secondary and university students who aspired to be engineers. Another project had been established to support girls who were not in education, training or employment. Following the establishment of a project to empower rural women through cooperatives, over 860 new cooperatives had been established throughout the country. In 2021, legal regulations had been adopted to enable women's cooperatives to receive various forms of support, including financial assistance.

12. Awareness-raising seminars and training activities had been held for senior executives as part of efforts to implement gender responsive planning and budgeting in Türkiye. Women's participation rate in the labour force had increased by over 5 percentage points between 2002 and 2021 while the employment rate for women had increased by over 3 percentage points over the same period. The percentage of women engaged in informal employment had fallen significantly over that period.

13. Women's participation in decision-making had gradually increased over the years. Between 2002 and 2018, the percentage of parliamentarians who were women had risen from 4.4 per cent to 17.45 per cent. Moreover, more than 50 per cent of academics, 47 per cent of lawyers and architects, and 40 per cent of public officials were women. In the diplomatic sphere, a total of 73 ambassadors and 14 consuls general were women. In the area of education, over 83 per cent of girls of primary school age and over 88 per cent of girls of secondary school age were enrolled in school. A higher percentage of women than men pursued higher education.

14. Steps had been taken to increase access to education in rural areas where there were no schools. Multipurpose community centres provided literacy training and other forms of support to women.

15. Under the Civil Code, the minimum age for marriage was 18 years for both men and women. However, girls and boys could marry at the age of 17 years with their parents' consent or at the age of 16 years by decision of a judge in extraordinary circumstances. The sexual abuse of children was established as a separate offence in the Criminal Code and persons convicted of sexually abusing a child were liable to a prison sentence of between 8 and 15 years. In certain circumstances, the penalty was aggravated. Between 2019 and 2021, the percentage of marriages involving a person of the age of 16 or 17 years had fallen for both boys and girls.

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16. **Ms. Ameline** said that she wished to know whether the State party's policies on the promotion of equality were still expressly based on the pre-eminence of international law, dialogue with the European Union and the constitutional principle of secularism. In view of the Government's decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, she wondered whether the State party would cooperate with the Committee in examining possible avenues for reconsidering the decision.

17. Although the state of emergency imposed in the wake of the attempted coup d'état had been lifted in July 2018, some of the laws established in connection with it remained in force. In view of that situation, the Committee would be interested to know whether the Government was committed to re-establishing the rule of law, prioritizing measures to combat all forms of discrimination against women and ensuring that women enjoyed the right to freedom of expression and demonstration. It would also be interested to learn whether the commission established in 2016 to assess the impact of the state of emergency on the functioning of democratic institutions had completed its work and, if so, whether the assessment addressed the various cases in which the rights of women judges, lawyers and journalists had been violated.

18. She asked whether the Government would consider adopting a new law, or amending Law No. 6284, to ensure the protection of women belonging to cultural, ethnic and sexual minorities against all forms of discrimination, including intersectional discrimination. The delegation might state whether the Convention had been fully incorporated into training programmes for judges and whether all courts in the country took account of the Convention. The Committee would welcome information on any measures being taken to strengthen the authority of decisions issued by the Constitutional Court. Lastly, she wondered whether the Government would consider developing a national plan on women and peace and security in order to ensure the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

19. **Ms. Haidar** said that, following the attempted coup d'état in 2016, around 4,000 judges had been dismissed and the independence of the judiciary had been seriously undermined. She wished to know whether objective, merit-based criteria for the selection of new judges would be established and steps would be taken to reinstate and compensate judges who had been unfairly dismissed.

20. The Committee wished to know what measures would be taken to increase women's participation in the Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors and whether training in gender issues would be provided to new judges. It would also be grateful to learn whether the Convention fell within the mandate of the Law Enforcement Monitoring Commission. The delegation might describe any measures being taken to ensure that civil society organizations were free to carry out their work without interference. She wondered whether the independence of the National Human Rights Institution would be enhanced to increase its chances of acquiring category A status in accordance with the Paris Principles.

21. Lastly, while the fight against terrorism was legitimate, it did not exempt any State from the obligation to ensure that any response was measured and respected human rights, in particular those of women, the primary victims of conflict but also the main forces for peace. That obligation applied to the domestic crisis that brought the State party into conflict with the Kurdistan Workers' Party and to military offences carried out outside the country's borders.

22. **Ms. Yanık** (Türkiye) said that her Government's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention did not mean that it had taken a step back from the fight to eliminate

discrimination against women. The Convention had become the subject of much political debate and the controversy had actually been weakening Türkiye in its efforts to combat violence against women. Despite the withdrawal, the country continued to adhere to all international standards regarding the prevention of violence against women. Türkiye remained committed to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to pursuing all efforts to bring its domestic legislation further into line with the provisions of the Convention.

23. The Government had declared a state of emergency in 2016 at a point of crisis, following decades spent fighting terrorism. By way of comparison, France had recently remained in a state of emergency for many months following a single terrorist incident. Türkiye had been fighting the Kurdistan Workers' Party and other terrorist organizations for 40 years and, in spite of that struggle, the rule of law had always been protected and the Government had continued to uphold the human rights of its women, children and men.

24. With respect to migrants, 4 million refugees had arrived in Türkiye over the previous decade. Many of them were vulnerable women and children. The Government had adopted a meticulous and humanitarian approach to those refugees, who had all been provided with access to health, education and other basic services.

25. Concerning reports about the wrongful detention of women, all crimes were clearly defined in national legislation. It was never acceptable to break the law or to resort to terrorism, even if those acts were carried out in the name of protecting women's rights. However, the delegation did not wish to enter into political discussions; it wished to hold a constructive dialogue regarding her country's implementation of the Convention.

26. The Government had taken various measures related to women's access to justice. Indeed, improving access to justice for women was one of the five main goals of the Fourth National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women. Specific measures had been taken for victims of violence, including the enactment of regulations for positive discrimination.

27. The Government attached the utmost importance to its cooperation with civil society organizations. Those organizations were involved in decision-making at every level when it came to designing and implementing policies on women's rights. The Government was committed to continuing to work closely with civil society over the coming years to improve the situation of women in the country.

28. **Ms. Ameline** said that it was not customary for delegations to use their constructive dialogues with the Committee to pass comment on the actions of other States. In that regard, the delegation's comments about the state of emergency in France had been regrettable.

29. In 2018, the State party had established the Inquiry Commission on State of Emergency Measures to study the impact of the state of emergency on fundamental human rights in Türkiye. The State party had provided no specific information on the mission and mandate of that commission. Various facts relating to the abuse of women's rights under the state of emergency had been established and accepted by the international community. She therefore wished to know whether those facts had been examined by the commission as part of its investigation.

30. **Ms. Haidar** said that she wished to know more about the situation facing those female judges who had been relieved of their duties following the attempted coup d'état but had then been acquitted of any wrongdoing. It would be helpful to understand whether the State party intended to reinstate them or to compensate them for the moral or material damage that they had suffered. The Government had the opportunity, following the lifting of the state of emergency, to demonstrate to everyone that the rule of law had been fully established once more in Türkiye.

31. **Ms. Akizuki** said that it would be useful for the delegation to provide further information on the ways in which the Istanbul Convention had weakened women's rights in the State party, including an indication as to the specific articles of the Convention that had proved problematic. If the State party believed that the international conventions that it had signed were not proving to be useful tools in the promotion of women's rights, it did not necessarily have to withdraw from them. Türkiye was entitled to remain a party to those

conventions while enacting domestic legislation with stronger guarantees of rights than those provided for in those instruments.

32. **Ms. Yanık** (Türkiye) said that she wished to clarify that the Istanbul Convention had not in itself weakened women's rights in Türkiye. Rather, the instrument had become a source of controversy and the subject of heated political debates that had hindered efforts to combat gender-based violence in the country. In general, Türkiye attached the utmost importance to international instruments. Each country nonetheless had its own conditions and experiences and should be free to develop its practices accordingly.

33. The Inquiry Commission on State of Emergency Measures was composed of 220 people, including 70 rapporteurs. The Commission was responsible for examining applications submitted by people who objected to the way they had been treated during the state of emergency. Some appeals had been upheld by the Commission and others had been dismissed. With regard to the dismissal of members of the judiciary, there had indeed been cases where female judges had been removed from their posts and subsequently acquitted of any wrongdoing. As with all public employees who had successfully appealed against their dismissals, those women had been reinstated to their positions.

34. **Ms. Dettmeijer-Vermeulen** said that, despite its withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, policies and measurements concerning the advancement of women had been included in the State party's Eleventh Development Plan and Fourth National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women. It would be helpful to understand the extent to which those plans reflected the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19 (CEDAW/C/GC/35), which had been based on the Istanbul Convention. She also wished to know why exactly Türkiye had withdrawn from that instrument and whether any of the other international conventions to which it was a party were also considered to be hindering its efforts to promote human rights.

35. Definitions of gender and the concept of the individual appeared to have been removed from the latest government documents and action plans. Similarly, the notions of gender equality and gender-based discrimination had not been included in the Eleventh Development Plan. It was unclear what the absence of those concepts from national policy documents said about the State party's commitment to the Committee's recommendations.

36. The Committee had received reports suggesting that the Human Rights and Equality Institution of Türkiye was not yet operationally, structurally or financially independent. She invited the delegation to comment on those reports, particularly in relation to the Institution's compliance with the Paris Principles. The Committee would also welcome further information on any steps taken for the accreditation of the Human Rights and Equality Institution with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. She wished to know how the Ombudsman Institution was financed and how its autonomy was guaranteed.

37. Lastly, it would be helpful to know whether either the Human Rights and Equality Institution or the Ombudsman Institution had brought any appeals against the decision of the Council of State to uphold the decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention. Some members of the Human Rights and Equality Institution had publicly expressed support for the withdrawal. She invited the delegation to explain how such comments might have affected the role of that mechanism in defending the rights of women.

38. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that high rates of violence, including an increase in violence against women with disabilities, had been recorded during the COVID-19 pandemic. She therefore wished to know why no temporary special measures had been adopted to address the issue of gender-based violence in the context of the pandemic. She would also be interested to hear whether the State party would consider setting up a dedicated hotline for the purpose of reporting violence against women or adopting other temporary special measures to deal with the disproportionate social and economic impact that COVID-19 had had on women in Türkiye.

39. Given that women accounted for only 11.71 per cent of all public officials in senior decision-making positions, she wondered whether the State party would consider adopting temporary special measures to introduce quotas aimed at increasing the representation of

women at the highest levels of the administration. She also wished to know whether specific targets and timelines had been set for the achievement of gender parity in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, including in commissions, specialized committees and task forces, such as the Coronavirus Scientific Advisory Board and the Human Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Board.

40. She would like to know whether the State party would consider adopting temporary special measures both to ensure the political participation of women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons and the voting rights of homeless women and women living in shelters who lacked a home address.

41. With respect to education and employment, she wished to know the total number of girls and women who had benefited from the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education and Entrepreneurship Development Support programmes. It would also be interesting to understand, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 crisis, whether the State party would consider introducing special regulations to protect women through social assistance, employment and income protection programmes during future periods of emergency, such as an earthquake or, indeed, a pandemic.

42. Lastly, there had been reports concerning restrictions of the right to freedom of assembly in the State party, particularly for women's rights organizations and groups of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons. She therefore wondered whether the Government would include temporary special measures to protect the right of women to assembly and other rights, particularly in the light of reports that women's rights organizations and organizations of lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons had been threatened through arbitrary arrest and use of force.

43. **Ms. Yanık** (Türkiye) said that the Committee's recommendations and the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women were reflected in both the Eleventh Development Plan and Fourth National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women. The former, which was a general document aimed at improving the welfare of everyone in the State party, made specific reference to women's empowerment and the prevention of crime and discrimination against women. Through the implementation of that plan, the Government aimed to support the economic, social and cultural development of women at all levels, including through the elimination of early marriages and other kinds of abuse, the implementation of gender-sensitive budgeting, the provision of entrepreneurship training and the development of women's representation in the media. The Fourth National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women, which included best practices from equivalent instruments in other countries, set out the Government's zero tolerance policy to violence against women. Actions that had been taken under the Plan had already reached thousands of women.

44. She wished to stress that any members who had supported the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention had now left the Human Rights and Equality Institution. She hoped that the Committee's consideration of her country's work on women's rights would not be clouded by the opinions of those individuals.

45. **A representative of Türkiye** said that the Ombudsman Institution and the Human Rights and Equality Institution were both fully independent organizations. The latter had been established in accordance with the requirements of the Optional Protocol to the Convention and other United Nations standards. Both institutions received and investigated complaints of potential human rights violations.

46. The Inquiry Commission on the State of Emergency Measures had conducted investigations into claims by those affected by the state of emergency, and compensation had already been awarded in some cases. Members of the judiciary who had been wrongfully removed from their posts had been reinstated and received their salaries for the time that they had been barred from office.

47. **Ms. Yanık** (Türkiye) said that every year between 2020 and 2022, approximately 300,000 students had benefited from the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education Programme, with support from the European Union Facility for Refugees in Turkey. More than half of the beneficiaries were girls.

48. The participation of women in decision-making positions was strongly encouraged through awareness-raising and incentives. For example, employers were offered a subsidy to employ women in order to increase women's participation in the labour force.

49. The right of assembly was guaranteed under Turkish law and it applied to all. No one was required to seek permission from any public authority to hold assemblies, meetings or demonstrations. However, such gatherings were prohibited in certain areas, such as parts of Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, in the interests of security.

50. All forms of discrimination on any basis was prohibited by law, including in employment and education, and victims of discrimination were entitled to claim compensation. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex persons enjoyed the same rights as all people under the law.

51. The Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior and civil society gathered information on gender-based violence and femicide and reported such information in a transparent and meticulous manner. All mechanisms to protect women from gender-based and domestic violence that had been established under the Istanbul Convention remained in place. The Convention was one instrument among many and the Government would continue to take all necessary steps to combat violence against women, while taking into account the varying needs of different groups of women, including those from conservative and religious communities.

52. **Ms. Stott Despoja** said that she wondered whether it was true that gender identity and sexual orientation were not specified in legislation against hate crimes or referred to as types of prohibited grounds of discrimination in Law No. 6701 on Human Rights and Equality Institution.

53. **Ms. Yanık** (Türkiye) said that no specific category of people was singled out under Turkish anti-discrimination legislation. Under article 10 of the Constitution, everyone was equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief or religion, and all laws were drafted based on that principle. No special provision prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity was necessary.

54. **Ms. Tisheva** said that, despite the positive legislative and policy measures that had been introduced, especially those designed to address gender stereotyping, there was a risk that they would be overshadowed by the country's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention, which had been done on purely ideological grounds, including the Government's claim that the Convention was incompatible with traditional family values. In that context, she wished to know what measures the State party would take to eliminate gender stereotypes, particularly with respect to the role and responsibilities of women in society, and promote a positive image of women in all areas of life. She asked how the Government would monitor the implementation of such measures and what the timeline might be.

55. She would appreciate information about the steps taken to ensure that all cases of femicide, honour crimes and forced suicide were promptly investigated and the perpetrators punished, and to gather and analyse statistics on femicide in consultation with women's rights organizations. She wondered when the State party would explicitly criminalize domestic violence and how it would ensure that offenders were prosecuted. She would be interested in hearing about any measures the State party was taking to tackle stereotypes related to domestic and sexual violence held by members of the judiciary and exclude those associated with the presumed standards of conduct of women. It would be useful to know whether the Government planned to increase funding for non-governmental organizations that provided support services to women victims of violence and establish a hotline specifically for victims of domestic violence. Lastly, she would like to know what resources would be deployed to provide support services tailored to the needs of women and girls who had been victims of sexual abuse or discrimination.

56. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wondered whether the State party had investigated possible links between child marriage and human trafficking. He wished to learn what strategy was in place to ensure adequate funding for shelters and support services provided by non-governmental organizations for women and girls who had been victims of sexual abuse and

how many shelters for such victims were currently operating in the country. Information about the helpline for trafficking victims and any available statistical data about its use would be helpful. He would appreciate further information on the main obstacles to the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto and the national action plan to combat human trafficking. Did it contain specific measures to address trafficking of women and girls? It would be helpful to know how the Government cooperated with international bodies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the fight against trafficking. He wished to know what measures were in place to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation and prevent abduction of women and girls for exploitation.

57. **A representative of Türkiye** said that, since the start of the pandemic, the number of interviews of potential victims of human trafficking had doubled and the number of people identified as victims had increased significantly. Persons identified as victims were given 30-day residency permits, which could be extended for six-month periods, up to a maximum stay of three years. Approximately 80 per cent of foreigners interviewed as potential trafficking victims were women. Shelters and health-care and psychological support services were available to victims.

58. **A representative of Türkiye** said that judges denied half of all marriage petitions by such persons and a very small proportion of all married couples were under 18 years of age.

59. The concept of “honour” was now treated as an aggravating factor in crimes of femicide, which were punishable by life imprisonment. There had been a significant decrease in the number of honour killings as a result.

60. **Ms. Yanık (Türkiye)** said that in September 2021, a commission had been established to prevent violence against women, which was coordinated by various ministries. An impact assessment of the implementation of Law No. 6284 on the Prevention of Violence against Women and the Protection of the Family was currently being conducted and members of the judiciary received training on the prevention of such violence. In July 2021, the Penal Code had been amended to establish aggravated penalties for crimes involving violence against women, including threats, bodily harm, torture or murder. Furthermore, stalking had been made an offence under the Penal Code since studies had shown that women who had been stalked were likely to be subjected to physical violence.

61. Schoolchildren at all levels, from preschool to secondary education, were taught about gender equality. In textbooks and other educational materials, boys and girls were represented as equals and gender-sensitive language was used. For example, care was taken to ensure that no profession was associated with a specific gender so as not to perpetuate stereotypes. Given that early education was key to ensuring gender equality in future generations, a programme offering low-income families cash incentives to send their children to preschool had been introduced.

62. A number of measures had been taken to combat and raise awareness of gender stereotyping, such as the provision of relevant training to 2.5 million public officials, including police officers, religious authorities and the armed forces. Training initiatives were also conducted in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to prevent early and forced marriages. Law No. 6284 provided effective protection to victims and potential victims of violence and stalking, and women would receive police support within approximately five minutes of activating the mobile application to combat violence against women called KADES.

63. While it was true that migrants in Türkiye were at risk of early marriage, nationals who wanted to marry early were supported in a holistic manner and encouraged to wait. It was not the case that honour killings were punished less severely; that type of homicide was considered to be an aggravating factor in the determination of penalties for both perpetrators and their accomplices.

64. **A representative of Türkiye** said that all suspicious deaths, including honour killings and forced suicides, were investigated by the public prosecutor’s office, and mandatory autopsies were performed in compliance with strict regulations. The curriculum for the training of judges and prosecutors included mandatory components on Law No. 6284 and the

Convention in order to raise their awareness of domestic violence and violence against women.

65. **Ms. Yanık (Türkiye)** said that great care was taken to ensure that criminal proceedings did not further harm victims of sexual violence, and the prosecutor was legally required to be present when they were interviewed. Specialized medical support units for victims of sexual violence had been established, and specific budgets assigned to that end. There were 112 government-run women's shelters, in 81 provinces. In addition, shelters had been set up by the migration management authorities and municipalities, and one shelter was run by a non-governmental organization. There were 149 shelters in total. While in 2020, the women and children benefiting from the shelters numbered 33,000, in 2021 that figure had increased to 84,000. Some 48 per cent of women benefiting from the shelters had been at risk of violence.

66. **Mr. Safarov** said that he wished to know whether the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice had drawn up an action plan to combat trafficking in persons, and a corresponding hotline.

67. **A representative of Türkiye** said that the action plan was expected to be finalized in 2022, and that an existing hotline could also be used to report trafficking.

Articles 7–9

68. **Ms. Stott Despoja**, noting that in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2021 Türkiye was ranked 114 when it came to women's political empowerment, and 140 in terms of their economic participation and opportunity, said she would like information on any measures taken to increase the number of women in the parliament and politics and wished to know whether the State party expected any significant constitutional or other legislative changes prior to the next general and local elections to improve those areas. She also wished to know the outcome of the projects to increase women's political participation and participation in decision-making under the 2020 Annual Presidential Programme and what legislative and practical steps were being taken to prevent harassment of and violence against women in politics. She wondered whether the State party would be willing to consider ensuring the representation of minority women, including lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons in the parliament, political parties or public administration, for example through the introduction of statutory quotas. She wished to know what outcomes had been achieved under the Strategy Paper and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment (2018–2023), specifically regarding the development of local and administrative initiatives in that regard. Information on plans to increase the percentage of women in ambassador-level posts abroad would also be welcome. She would be grateful for information on the legal basis for the proceedings taken out against the Tarlabası Community Centre and the We Will Stop Femicide Platform for allegedly acting against the law and against morality, and on the argument of immorality in general.

69. **Ms. Narain**, recalling that in 2008 the State party had withdrawn its declaration on article 9 of the Convention following national legislative amendments, said she wished to know whether any social, cultural or economic factors still affected or impeded the exercise by women of their right to equal nationality. She would be grateful for information on how many foreign men had acquired Turkish citizenship by marrying a Turkish woman since the legislation on nationality had been amended in 2003 and wondered whether men and women had equal rights in law with regard to their foreign spouse's acquisition of citizenship and their retaining Turkish nationality after marriage. She wished to know whether legislation provided for circumstances in which a Turkish passport could be cancelled or withdrawn, and whether the citizen in question was given prior notice and could challenge the decision in court. She would also like to know how the State party was ensured that women refugees faced no discrimination in obtaining Turkish nationality. Also, bearing in mind the problem of forced marriage between refugee women and girls and Turkish men, she wished to know what steps were taken to ensure that the particularly vulnerable position of refugee women and girls was not exploited in exchange for the granting of citizenship.

70. **A representative of Türkiye** said that before refugees marrying a Turkish national could be granted citizenship, they were required to have refugee status and to have lived in

Türkiye for five consecutive years. Relevant statistics would be provided subsequently in writing.

71. **Ms. Yanık (Türkiye)**, recalling the objectives of the Eleventh Development Plan (2019–2023) in the area of increasing women’s participation in decision-making mechanisms, said that various initiatives had been established in that regard under the 2020 Annual Presidential Programme. Giving examples of the number of women in administrative and political posts, she said that in 2021 there were 41 women general administrators. There were 19 female rectors in 200 universities and 33 per cent of professors were women. In the Ministry of Interior, 5 to 6 per cent of law enforcement managers were women. In 2022 there were approximately 46 female judges; and around 16 per cent of prosecutors and 47 per cent of lawyers were women. While there was no specific legal framework covering harassment of women in politics, the regulations of individual political parties provided for equality of men and women.

Articles 10–14

72. **Mr. Safarov**, noting the figures that had been provided on girls’ enrolment in schools and universities since 2018, said that he wished to receive the relevant statistics for 2021. He would also like to know what had been done to combat gender stereotyping in teaching materials at all educational levels and what measures had been taken to combat bullying at school, especially the bullying of girls. He would appreciate information on the legal provisions protecting children from violence and corporal punishment at school; on the right to education of pregnant girls and girls who were mothers; and on the support provided to those girls.

73. **Ms. Yanık (Türkiye)** said that, in 2021, girls’ enrolment in primary school stood at 93 per cent, while for secondary school the figure was approximately 88 per cent. For higher education, while in the early 2000s only 13 per cent of women went to university, the enrolment rate currently stood at 48 per cent. The literacy rate for girls and women was 95 per cent. In rural areas, some 320,000 children went to boarding schools, of whom a greater proportion were girls. Some schools had closed because of a lack of pupils, in which cases the local authorities transferred the remaining pupils to other schools free of charge. In very rural areas a system of combined classes had been implemented for over 1 million pupils in 2021, approximately half of whom were girls. The Constitution provided general protection against discrimination in school curricula and teaching materials, thereby fostering the elimination of gender stereotypes in that area.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.