



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
25 February 2026

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Concluding observations on the tenth periodic report of El Salvador*

1. The Committee considered the tenth periodic report of the El Salvador (CEDAW/C/SLV/10) at its 2194th and 2195th meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.2194 and CEDAW/C/SR.2195), held on 12 February 2026. The Committee's list of issues and questions is contained in CEDAW/C/SLV/Q/10, and the responses of the country are contained in CEDAW/C/SLV/RQ/10.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee appreciates the submission by the State Party of its tenth periodic report. It also appreciates the State Party's follow-up report (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9/Add.1) and its written replies to the list of issues and questions raised by the pre-sessional working group, as well as the oral presentation by the delegation and the further clarifications provided in response to the questions posed orally by the Committee during the dialogue.

3. The Committee commends the State Party's delegation, which was headed by the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adriana María Mira de Pereira, and included representatives of the Counsel-General's Office, the Ministry of Health, the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women, the Criminal Chamber of the Supreme Court, the National Council for Early Childhood, Children and Adolescents, the General Directorate of Penal Centres, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Rina Yessenia Lozano Gallegos, and other representatives of the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

B. Positive aspects

4. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved since the consideration in 2017 of the State Party's combined eighth and ninth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/SLV/8-9) in undertaking legislative reforms, in particular, the adoption of the following:

(a) Legislative Decree No. 664 reforming the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-free Life for Women, in 2023;

* Adopted by the Committee at its ninety-second session (2–20 February 2026).



(b) The Growing Together Act for the Protection of Early Childhood, Children and Adolescents, in 2022;

(c) The Loving Nutrition Act for the Promotion and Protection of and Support for Breastfeeding, in 2022;

(d) The Caring Births Act for Decent Childbirth and Loving and Sensitive Care for Newborn Children, in 2021;

(e) The Special Act on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, in 2020;

(f) The National Comprehensive Health System Act, in 2019.

5. The Committee welcomes the State Party's efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality, such as the adoption and establishment of the following:

(a) The National Policy on Joint Responsibility for Care (2022–2030);

(b) The national strategy for the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) on women and peace and security (2023–2027);

(c) The Women's Financial Inclusion Policy (2022–2026);

(d) The code of conduct to prevent gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking in the tourism sector, in 2022;

(e) The National Cross-sectoral Strategy for the Prevention of Pregnancy in Girls and Adolescents (2017–2027).

6. The Committee welcomes that, in the period since the consideration of the previous report, the State Party acceded to the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) of the International Labour Organization in 2023.

C. Sustainable Development Goals

7. The Committee welcomes the international support for the Sustainable Development Goals and calls for the realization of de jure (legal) and de facto (substantive) gender equality, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Committee recalls the importance of Goal 5 and of the mainstreaming of the principles of equality and non-discrimination throughout all 17 Goals. It urges the State Party to recognize women as the driving force of the sustainable development of the State Party and to adopt relevant policies and strategies to that effect.

D. Parliament

8. The Committee stresses the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention (see [A/65/38](#), part two, annex VI). It invites the Legislative Assembly, in line with its mandate, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the submission of the next periodic report under the Convention.

E. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Constitutional and legislative framework and definition of discrimination against women

9. The Committee notes that both direct and indirect discrimination is recognized in the Act on Equality, Equity and Eradication of Discrimination against Women and that multiple forms of discrimination are acknowledged in some laws. However, it notes with concern:

(a) That a systematic recognition of intersectional discrimination is absent, leaving women belonging to disadvantaged groups without adequate protection, in particular lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women;

(b) The failure to implement the 2022 ruling of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice on gender identity-based discrimination and legal name reform for transgender persons, and the State Party's dismissal as "gender ideology" and removal from equality policies of sexual orientation and gender identity.

10. Recalling the links between articles 1 and 2 of the Convention and target 5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, to end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Amend its legislation to explicitly prohibit intersectional discrimination;

(b) Undertake a comprehensive review of national legislation to ensure full harmonization with the Convention, implement the Constitutional Chamber ruling enabling transgender persons to change their legal name, and ensure that equality policies explicitly include lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex status as protected grounds.

Women's access to justice

11. The Committee acknowledges the efforts made by the State Party in capacity-building for the judiciary. However, it notes with concern:

(a) The practice of mass trials in which multiple defendants, including women, are prosecuted simultaneously, without adequate safeguards ensuring individual rights to a fair hearing, effective legal representation and individualized determination of guilt;

(b) The insufficient training of members of the judiciary, including justices of the peace, on gender-based violence and gender-sensitive methods of investigation and interviewing, resulting in the improper handling of cases involving violations of women's rights;

(c) The persistent barriers faced by women, particularly women in rural areas, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, women living in poverty and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, in accessing justice, including reasonable accommodation and interpretation;

(d) The ongoing impunity for conflict-related crimes, such as sexual violence, the shelving of the Transitional Justice Bill and the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly's Justice and Human Rights Commission;

(e) The failure to ensure a fair trial for women detained on charges of "aggravated homicide" in cases of obstetric emergencies.

12. **Recalling its general recommendation No. 33 (2015) on women's access to justice, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **End mass trials and ensure that every woman has access to a fair trial, including individualized legal representation;**

(b) **Institute mandatory and evaluable training for the judiciary on gender-based violence and gender-sensitive investigation and interrogation methods, in particular for justices of the peace;**

(c) **Remove barriers to women's access to justice by establishing accessible courts in rural areas, providing affordable and, when necessary, free legal aid and interpretation services and ensuring reasonable accommodation for women with disabilities;**

(d) **End impunity for conflict-related crimes, including sexual violence, by strengthening transitional justice mechanisms, with the meaningful participation of women's organizations;**

(e) **Guarantee due process, fair trial and specialized legal assistance for all women and girls detained or prosecuted for abortion-related offences or obstetric emergencies.**

State of exception

13. The Committee notes that, since March 2022, the State Party is under an exceptional legal and institutional framework adopted in response to gang-related violence, which has profoundly reshaped the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights. While the State Party reports significant reductions in homicide rates and improvements in public security, including for communities historically affected by gang-related violence, the prolonged state of exception has raised concerns among international human rights bodies in relation to arbitrary detention, lack of due process, restricted access to counsel and family, and detention conditions, including for women, in particular those who are relatives of detainees, are human rights defenders or journalists or are in detention. In this regard, the Committee is deeply concerned that the mass detention of predominantly young men has produced significant emotional and socioeconomic impacts for women and particularly girls, who lose contact with parents or relatives and must frequently assume sole responsibility for household income, childcare and care of dependent relatives as well as of those detained, often without adequate social protection or effective remedies to challenge the detentions.

14. **The Committee urges the State Party to lift the state of exception and restore constitutional guarantees, ensuring that any exceptional measures are strictly temporary, proportionate, necessary, and subject to independent and timely judicial oversight, and conduct a comprehensive gender impact assessment of all measures, including legal reforms, adopted under the state of exception, to ensure compliance with international human rights standards, prevent disproportionate effects on women and girls and take corrective action to address identified violations of women's rights.**

National machinery for the advancement of women

15. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The weakening of the capacity of the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women and its reduced impact on policy decisions affecting women and girls, compounded by massive budget and staff cuts, resulting in the closure of departmental offices and reduced services;

(b) The State Party's failure to implement systematic gender mainstreaming and budgeting across government institutions and the limited implementation of the National Equality Plan (2021–2025);

(c) The dissolution of the Commission on Women and Gender Equality of the Legislative Assembly in 2024;

(d) The absence of mechanisms to ensure the meaningful participation of women's organizations in the design, implementation and monitoring of gender equality policies.

16. Recalling the guidance provided in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular regarding the conditions necessary for the effective functioning of national machineries, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Urgently restore and strengthen the institutional capacity of the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women and ensure adequate budget allocations and staffing to enable it to effectively coordinate and monitor gender equality policies at all levels of government;**

(b) **Develop and implement comprehensive institutional strategies to ensure systematic gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting across all government institutions, policies and programmes, with regular monitoring and evaluation;**

(c) **Reinstate a dedicated parliamentary commission on women and gender equality, with adequate resources and a mandate to bring gender equality concerns to the legislation process;**

(d) **Establish mechanisms ensuring the meaningful participation of women's organizations in the design, implementation and monitoring of gender equality policies and programmes.**

National human rights institution

17. The Committee notes the re-accreditation of the Office of the Human Rights Advocate of El Salvador with "A" status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in October 2022. However, it also notes that there are concerns about its recently weakened independence and insufficient action in the context of the state of exception.

18. The Committee recommends that the State Party implement the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions with the advice and technical support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and strengthen the independence of the Office of the Human Rights Advocate, ensuring that it fulfils its mandate regarding complaints of human rights abuses related to the state of exception.

Temporary special measures

19. The Committee notes with concern that the State Party has not adopted comprehensive temporary special measures to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality of women and men in areas where women remain underrepresented or disadvantaged, such as political and public life, education, employment, economic empowerment, health services, and access to land and productive resources.

20. **The Committee recommends that the State Party adopt temporary special measures, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, such as quotas, preferential recruitment and treatment, and gender-responsive procurement with time-bound targets, to accelerate the substantive equality of women and men in all areas where women, particularly rural, older, single and poor women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, are underrepresented or disadvantaged, including political and public life, education, employment, economic empowerment, health services, and access to land and productive resources.**

Stereotypes and harmful practices

21. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) Persistent patriarchal stereotypes that are deeply rooted in Salvadoran society, reinforcing beliefs in women's inferiority and subordination to men and confining women to roles defined by modesty, obedience, self-sacrifice and motherhood;

(b) That religious institutions significantly influence politicians and public institutions to perpetuate gender stereotypes and discrimination against women and the lack of systematic involvement of media, civil society, community leaders, teachers and other actors in awareness-raising campaigns;

(c) Gender stereotypes in the media, advertisements and statements of public officials, including government declarations about removing "gender ideology" from school curricula.

22. **Drawing attention to joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, as revised, and in line with target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Adopt and implement comprehensive strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in Salvadoran society through awareness-raising campaigns, educational reforms, and targeted interventions such as capacity-building for media professionals and religious leaders;**

(b) **Systematically involve media, civil society, religious and community leaders, teachers and other relevant actors in awareness-raising campaigns on gender stereotypes, and engage religious institutions so that they refrain from perpetuating discriminatory gender norms;**

(c) **Establish State institutions to monitor and address gender stereotyping in media, advertisements and public discourse, with enforcement mechanisms and sanctions for violations, and ensure that public officials refrain from statements that discredit gender equality or reinforce gender stereotypes.**

Gender-based violence against women and girls

23. The Committee notes the positive trend in the reduction of the femicide rate in recent years, as well as policies to provide support to families of victims. Nevertheless, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) The persistently high levels of gender-based violence against women, which remains pervasive and largely underreported;

(b) The extremely low conviction rate (9 per cent) in cases of gender-based violence against women, as well as the lack of capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials and service providers on gender-sensitive investigation and interviewing methods and on gender-responsive victim support services;

(c) Reports that sexual violence has increased under the state of exception, while the militarization of public spaces poses new threats to the personal security of women and girls;

(d) The lack of effective measures to investigate allegations of gender-based violence against women involving members of the police or security forces, and the absence of specific protocols to ensure independent investigations and accountability when perpetrators are State agents;

(e) Significant budget cuts for the Ciudad Mujer programme and service providers, the limited availability, geographical coverage, accessibility and capacity of shelters and specialized services including psychosocial counselling and rehabilitation, particularly in rural areas and for marginalized groups of women, and the lack of information on the impact of interventions for the rehabilitation of perpetrators;

(f) The lack of in-depth analysis of weaknesses in institutional responses contributing to femicide.

24. In line with its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, as well as target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure impact assessments and monitoring of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-free Life for Women and intensify efforts to prevent all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls;

(b) Address the low conviction rates in cases of gender-based violence against women by strengthening investigations and prosecutions, as well as mandatory and evaluable capacity-building for the judiciary and law enforcement personnel on the relevant criminal law provisions, procedures and international standards, the issuance and monitoring of protection orders, and other measures to ensure the effective prevention of and protection from gender-based violence against women;

(c) Conduct thorough investigations into all reports of sexual violence under the state of exception and ensure that women victims of gender-based violence have immediate access to protection orders and specialized victim support services;

(d) Establish clear protocols and independent mechanisms to investigate, prosecute and adequately punish all cases of gender-based violence perpetrated by members of the police or security forces, ensuring accountability for acts of State agents;

(e) Restore and significantly increase funding for specialized gender-based violence services, including under the Ciudad Mujer programme, and ensure sustainable resources through multi-year funding commitments for comprehensive service provision as well as the availability, sufficient regional coverage, accessibility and capacity of shelters and specialized victim support services including psychosocial counselling and rehabilitation in rural areas and for marginalized groups of women, including older women, Indigenous women

and women with disabilities, as well as perpetrator rehabilitation programmes and their evaluation;

(f) Implement in-depth multisectoral femicide reviews to improve responses to gender-based violence against women and girls.

Trafficking and exploitation of women in prostitution

25. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The absence of a comprehensive, evaluated and monitored national action plan against trafficking in persons, and limited civil society participation in elaborating such a plan;

(b) The insufficient identification and screening of trafficking victims and the lack of implementation of the existing standard operating procedures for victim identification;

(c) The risk that trafficking victims subjected to compelled criminal conduct face wrongful arrest and conviction under the state of exception due to the lack of screening, non-respect for the principle of non-punishment of trafficking victims, and the absence of safeguards for detained trafficking victims to disclose their status as trafficking victims;

(d) The insufficient funding for victim support services including shelters, medical treatment and legal aid, and the underfunding and poor service provision by the Counsel-General's Office;

(e) The persistently low investigation, prosecution and conviction rates in trafficking cases, even though the State is a high-risk country where trafficking is the largest criminal market;

(f) The lack of a clear legal and policy framework on sex work, leaving women sex workers vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, trafficking and inconsistent State responses, limiting the protection of victims of sexual exploitation.

26. Recalling its general recommendation No. 38 (2020) on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Adopt a comprehensive national action plan against human trafficking with clear objectives, indicators, timelines, budgets and monitoring mechanisms, ensuring meaningful civil society participation;

(b) Strengthen the early identification of trafficking victims through training, implementing the standard operating procedures and establishing an electronic case management system;

(c) Establish systematic screening protocols for all women arrested under the state of exception to identify trafficking victims, ensure that victims of trafficking are not criminalized but treated as beneficiaries of support services and protection and provide accessible mechanisms for women in detention to disclose situations of trafficking to independent legal counsel and specialized support services;

(d) Significantly increase the human, technical and financial resources for victim support services, including shelters, medical treatment and legal aid, and strengthen the capacity of the Counsel-General's Office and establish quality assessment protocols;

(e) **Strengthen investigations, prosecutions, conviction rates and sentencing policies in trafficking cases by establishing dedicated anti-trafficking units and addressing systemic obstacles such as inadequate funding, capacity gaps and poor institutional coordination;**

(f) **Adopt a comprehensive legal framework on sex work that protects women from exploitation, enables safe reporting, distinguishes trafficking victims from women in prostitution and provides exit programmes, including alternative income opportunities, for women wishing to leave prostitution.**

Equal participation in political and public life

27. The Committee notes the measures taken by the State Party to promote women's leadership in political and public life, that 31.7 per cent of Legislative Assembly members and 42.5 per cent of Central American Parliament members are women and that 37 breastfeeding rooms have been opened in diplomatic missions of the States Parties. However, the Committee notes with concern:

(a) That despite the 30 per cent quota, women remain underrepresented as mayors (only 18 per cent) and in the Legislative Assembly (where the number of seats held by women declined from 23 to 19) and that there is a lack of placement mandates and an absence of enforcement mechanisms and sanctions in case of non-compliance with the 30 per cent quota;

(b) That women chair none of the major committees of the Legislative Assembly and that the number of women ministers declined from 8 to 5 in 2025;

(c) The prevalence of hate speech and gender-based violence against women in politics;

(d) The structural barriers faced by rural women, Indigenous women, women of African descent, older women and women with disabilities in accessing political and public life.

28. **Recalling its general recommendations No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems and No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life, as well as target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals on ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Introduce measures ensuring parity, with fines for non-compliance for the nomination of candidates of both sexes to the Legislative Assembly and provincial and local councils and promote the appointment of Indigenous women, women of African descent, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women to decision-making positions;**

(b) **Promote women's equal and inclusive representation in leadership positions, including as Chairs of major parliamentary committees and as Speakers of the Legislative Assembly and provincial and local councils, and halt and reverse the drop in the number of women ministers;**

(c) **Ensure the effective implementation of the protocol for the prevention of and for caring for women victims of political violence through training for the judiciary, law enforcement officers, electoral committees and political parties, establish monitoring mechanisms, require parties to enforce internal regulations on gender equality and combating harassment, prevent hate speech and gender-based violence against women politicians, including online, and hold social media companies accountable for user-generated content;**

(d) Address structural barriers faced by rural women, Indigenous women, women of African descent, older women and women with disabilities in political participation, including through targeted campaign financing, capacity-building on political leadership and campaigning skills, the removal of financial and social barriers, and the adoption of temporary special measures, such as statutory quotas, reserved seats and parity requirements.

Nationality

29. The Committee notes that the Constitution guarantees equal nationality rights by descent to children born abroad to Salvadoran parents and allows dual or multiple nationality, which can be lost only through official renunciation. However, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) Administrative and documentation barriers prevent Salvadoran women from transmitting nationality to and registering their children, particularly those not registered on time, born abroad, whose mothers lack documentation, who live in rural areas or migrant settlements or who are internally displaced or deprived of liberty, creating a risk of statelessness;

(b) Rural and Indigenous women and their children face barriers in obtaining identity documents and birth certificates, which are further compounded by the reduction of the deadline for birth registration from 90 to 45 days.

30. In line with article 9 of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendations No. 32 (2014) on the gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women and No. 26 (2008) on women migrant workers, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Remove administrative and documentation barriers to ensure that all Salvadoran women can transmit their nationality to and obtain birth registration of their children by deploying mobile registration units to remote rural areas, simplifying late registration procedures and providing for user-friendly online registration, reducing registration fees and raising awareness about birth registration among marginalized groups of women, including those lacking documentation, rural women, internally displaced women, women in detention and migrant women;**

(b) **Assess the impact of the reduced time limit for birth registration and make adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not create additional barriers in accessing identity documents for rural and indigenous women and their children.**

Education

31. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The banning by the Ministry of Education of educational materials that are considered to promote "gender ideology" and its formal prohibition of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights programmes in 2024, in violation of the explicit provision in the Growing Together Act that all children and adolescents have the right to receive comprehensive education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, exposing girls and adolescents to an increased risk of early pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and sexual and gender-based violence;

(b) Barriers to quality education faced by rural women and girls and those with disabilities, including a lack of trained teachers, infrastructure inaccessibility and budgetary allocations, resulting in rural-urban disparities, high dropout rates and limited literacy programmes;

(c) Gender stereotypes in textbooks and educational materials and the lack of systematic capacity-building for teachers on preventing sexual and gender-based violence;

(d) The limited participation of girls and women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technologies, including artificial intelligence, and that the State Party does not guarantee equal access to all levels and fields of education for lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex girls and women.

32. In line with its general recommendation No. 36 (2017) on the right of girls and women to education and Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Restore comprehensive age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, modern contraceptives and sexually transmitted infections into curricula at all levels of education, in accordance with the Growing Together Act;

(b) Improve access to quality and inclusive education for rural girls and women and for those with disabilities, strengthen new inclusive and accessible educational centres in remote areas, expand literacy programmes and vocational education and adopt measures to reduce dropout rates, particularly among rural girls and girls with disabilities;

(c) Eliminate gender stereotypes from textbooks and materials at all levels of education and ensure that curricula and teacher training include women's human rights, gender equality and prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence in schools;

(d) Continue and further strengthen measures to address gender stereotypes and structural barriers that may deter or discourage young women and girls from pursuing studies and careers in traditionally male-dominated fields, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and information and communications technologies, including artificial intelligence.

Employment

33. The Committee welcomes that the State Party expanded inspections, employment programmes, entrepreneurship support, care policies and institutional mechanisms for gender equality. However, it notes with concern:

(a) The persistent gender wage gap and occupational segregation, women's concentration in low-paid sectors and informal employment, and the large gap in women's (48.17 per cent in 2024) and men's (79.56 per cent) labour force participation;

(b) Women's disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic and care work and insufficient support for women heads of household;

(c) The lack of implementation and monitoring of laws prohibiting workplace harassment and discrimination, insufficient data on complaints, investigations, prosecutions and convictions, and the absence of safe, confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms, including for women in the informal economy;

(d) The insufficient information on the protection of women domestic workers and women working in *maquilas* under home-based work schemes, in particular the lack of regulation of working hours, minimum wages and social protection coverage;

(e) That the enforcement of prohibitions of discriminatory recruitment practices, including compulsory pregnancy and HIV testing, remains inadequate in practice, particularly in high-risk sectors such as *maquilas*, domestic work and the informal economy.

34. In accordance with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Enforce the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in order to narrow and eventually close the gender pay gap by: (i) conducting regular labour inspections with sanctions for non-compliance; (ii) conducting regular pay surveys; (iii) assisting employers in submitting their gender pay gap data to the authorities and making voluntary efforts to close the gap; (iv) establishing pay transparency mechanisms, with a view to better understanding the reasons for the gender pay gap and gender pension gap; and (v) adopting targeted and concrete measures to increase women's access to formal and higher-paid employment;**

(b) **Recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work by fully implementing the National Policy on Joint Responsibility for Care 2022–2030 and the Growing Together Act through accessible and affordable childcare and care services for older persons and persons with disabilities, with expanded coverage particularly in rural and marginalized areas;**

(c) **Ensure the effective enforcement and monitoring of workplace anti-harassment and anti-discrimination laws through regular labour inspections and safe, confidential and independent reporting mechanisms for all women workers, including those in the informal economy, and regularly publish data on the number of complaints, on investigations and on the fines imposed;**

(d) **Adopt legislation to protect domestic workers and home-based workers from excessive working hours and to provide for adequate minimum wages and social protection coverage, including for women domestic workers and women working in *maquilas* or under home-based work schemes;**

(e) **Strengthen the enforcement of legislation prohibiting discriminatory recruitment practices, including compulsory pregnancy and HIV testing, through regular labour inspections in *maquilas*, domestic households and the informal economy, publish data on the fines imposed for violations and strengthen labour inspections in high-risk sectors;**

(f) **Ratify the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and the Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177) of the International Labour Organization.**

Health

35. The Committee recognizes the efforts made to improve women's and girls' access to sexual and reproductive health services. Nevertheless, it notes with concern:

(a) The limited access to health services, particularly sexual and reproductive health services, for rural women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and migrant women;

(b) That early pregnancies account for one third of all pregnancies in the State Party, often resulting from sexual violence, including rape and incest, and that suicide is the leading cause of adolescent maternal mortality;

(c) The harmful practices of forced sterilization of women and girls with disabilities and of surgical interventions on intersex children.

36. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Strengthen access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, for rural women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women and migrant women, including through culturally sensitive health services and reasonable accommodations;**

(b) **Adopt comprehensive measures to prevent and eliminate sexual violence against girls and adolescents, including through mandatory age-appropriate comprehensive sexual education and awareness-raising campaigns, ensure that survivors, including pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers, have access to confidential mental health services, adequate medical treatment and psychosocial care, and prevent early pregnancies by ensuring free access to modern contraceptives for all adolescents;**

(c) **Criminalize forced sterilization and require the free, prior and informed consent of women with disabilities and intersex women and children to any medical intervention, raising awareness among healthcare providers, judicial officers and law enforcement officials about the criminal nature of these harmful practices.**

37. The Committee is deeply concerned about the categorical criminalization of abortion in the State Party, which forces women and girls to resort to unsafe abortions that seriously endanger their lives and health and triggers high suicide rates among pregnant women, notably following rape. It notes with concern that women who have attempted to undergo abortion or have suffered a spontaneous abortion have been sentenced to up to 40 years' imprisonment on charges of aggravated homicide, sometimes without fair trial guarantees, including the right to legal defence.

38. The Committee recalls its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/SLV/CO/8-9, para. 39) and urges the State Party to:

(a) **Legalize abortion in cases of rape, incest, risk to the life or health of the pregnant woman, and severe fetal impairment and decriminalize it in all cases, with a view to progressively legalizing voluntary, safe and accessible abortion;**

(b) **Immediately suspend criminal proceedings against women for abortion or related "aggravated homicide", release all women detained on these charges and resume proceedings against women sentenced for having undergone abortion with a view to acquitting or pardoning them;**

(c) **Ensure, in line with the abortion care guideline of the World Health Organization (2022), that neither patients nor medical professionals face criminal sanctions and that women and girls have effective access to post-abortion care;**

(d) **Ensure that the professional secrecy of medical personnel and patient confidentiality are respected through adequate legislative safeguards and the implementation of compliance protocols by health centre personnel.**

Economic empowerment of women

39. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) That only 29 per cent of women use financial products, with rural, older and young women and women entrepreneurs facing obstacles in accessing accounts,

loans, credit and digital platforms, and the lack of tailored legislative and regulatory measures to ensure that the products of banking institutions meet women's needs, reduce barriers and provide customized services for micro-businesses and rural women entrepreneurs;

(b) That women athletes continue to face structural and practical barriers in sports, such as insufficient resources, pay disparities and a lack of professional development pathways in sports administration and coaching, despite their significant achievements in international competitions, limiting their economic opportunities and professional advancement in the sports sector.

40. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Adopt measures to increase women's financial inclusion through financial literacy, the removal of barriers to credit, gender-responsive banking products, and digital services, with customized products for rural women micro-entrepreneurs, mainstream gender-responsive approaches into fiscal and regulatory frameworks across the digital economy, artificial intelligence, green energy and financial services and ensure that informal and care workers have access to social security schemes to address feminized poverty;**

(b) **Promote women's participation in sports by allocating adequate resources for women's sports competitions and facilities, implementing equal pay policies for male and female athletes, creating professional development pathways for women in sports administration and coaching, and establishing scholarships and support systems for women athletes.**

Rural women

41. The Committee acknowledges the positive impact of the reduction of gang-related violence on rural women's rights. Nevertheless, it notes with concern:

(a) The lack of a gender perspective in all rural development policies or action plans;

(b) That approximately 70 per cent of rural women still lack access to direct water supply and that women often have to walk long distances to fetch water;

(c) Water pollution resulting from the repeal of the Act on the Prohibition of Metallic Mining and the resumption of mining operations;

(d) The high poverty rates among rural women.

42. In accordance with its general recommendation No. 34 (2016) on the rights of rural women and target 5.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) **Integrate a gender perspective into rural development policies and action plans;**

(b) **Ensure adequate access to clean water and sanitation for rural women and reduce the burden on women who must walk long distances to fetch water;**

(c) **Ensure women's access to safe drinking water, including through environmental impact assessments before authorizing mining activities and strict fines for companies that pollute water sources;**

(d) **Strengthen measures to reduce poverty among rural women.**

Women in detention

43. The Committee is gravely concerned about:

(a) The alarming conditions in women's prisons, which have deteriorated significantly under the ongoing state of exception, placing pregnant women, postpartum mothers and their children at grave risk, and that thousands of complaints on inadequate prison conditions and treatment have been dismissed;

(b) The near-total absence of healthcare in the Izalco maternity unit, the lack of adequate staff, equipment and supplies in facilities for pregnant women, and severe overcrowding resulting in transfers of female inmates to general population or men's prisons;

(c) The lack of regular prenatal and postnatal care for detained pregnant and postpartum women, with credible reports of only one prenatal checkup per pregnancy, the administration of expired medication, contraindicated drugs or no medication, the denial of emergency obstetric care, and incommunicado detention preventing family contact and health monitoring;

(d) The inadequate conditions for mothers detained with their children, including lack of access to clean water, inadequate nutrition, the absence of paediatric care and unsanitary living conditions, and the confirmed deaths of four children born in state prisons in 2025 due to inadequate conditions and lack of medical care and reports of additional deaths of pregnant women and newborns, including stillbirths resulting from the denial of medical care;

(e) The lack of official data on the total number of pregnant women still in detention (believed to exceed 250), pregnancy outcomes, maternal and infant mortality rates;

(f) The State Party's failure to implement existing national legislation protecting women during the perinatal period, including the Caring Births Act, and the violation of constitutional guarantees including habeas corpus for pregnant women and mothers in detention.

44. Recalling its general recommendation No. 24 (1999) on women and health, the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), the Committee urges the State Party to:

(a) Improve conditions in women's detention facilities to ensure standards in line with the Bangkok Rules and the Nelson Mandela Rules, including adequate healthcare, sanitation, nutrition, clean water, and living conditions that maintain the dignity and physical, mental and moral integrity of detained women, and ensure independent consideration by an external monitoring body of complaints by women in detention;

(b) Ensure that the Izalco maternity unit and other facilities where pregnant women are deprived of liberty have qualified medical staff including obstetricians, paediatricians, nurses and midwives available 24 hours a day and the necessary equipment and supplies for comprehensive prenatal, obstetric, postnatal and paediatric care, and end transfers of female inmates to general population or men's prisons, ensuring segregated facilities;

(c) Ensure that all pregnant and postpartum women in detention receive comprehensive healthcare including medical examinations, laboratory tests and ultrasound examinations, provide safe and non-expired medication, prohibit drugs contraindicated during pregnancy, ensure immediate access to emergency

obstetric care, and end incommunicado detention, allowing regular family contact and health monitoring;

(d) Urgently improve conditions for mothers and their children in prison by ensuring access to clean water, adequate nutrition, comprehensive paediatric healthcare, play, education, developmental programmes and safe hygienic environments, immediately investigate all child deaths in detention, hold accountable those responsible and implement preventive measures;

(e) Establish comprehensive systems for the collection of data on pregnant women in detention, including numbers, gestational age, pregnancy outcomes, mortality rates and care access, and publish data regularly;

(f) Ensure the full implementation of the Caring Births Act for detained women with independent monitoring, restore constitutional rights including habeas corpus (art. 11 of the Constitution), counsel (art. 12) and 72-hour arraignment (art. 13) and prioritize non-custodial alternatives for pregnant women and mothers in line with the Bangkok Rules.

Women human rights defenders

45. The Committee notes with concern repeated threats, intimidation and reprisals against women human rights defenders, particularly those defending sexual and reproductive health and rights and victims of enforced disappearances. It notes with particular concern:

(a) The absence of legislation specifically protecting women human rights defenders;

(b) The arbitrary detention, criminalization, surveillance and persecution of women human rights defenders in the context of the state of exception;

(c) Documented cases of harassment and intimidation, including digital violence and online harassment against women journalists and women human rights defenders, and the lack of effective investigations, prosecutions and convictions in such cases;

(d) That the Foreign Agents Act excessively restricts the work of women's civil society organizations.

46. Recalling its general recommendation No. 33, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Provide protection measures, safe reporting channels and psychosocial support for women human rights defenders, investigate and prosecute all acts of harassment, gender-based violence, intimidation and reprisals online and offline, and ensure the right of women human rights defenders to a fair trial and gender-sensitive victim protection;

(b) Immediately release all women human rights defenders detained for their legitimate work;

(c) End impunity by adequately punishing perpetrators of acts of harassment, intimidation, threats, digital violence and reprisals against women human rights defenders;

(d) Repeal the Foreign Agents Act to ensure that women's rights organizations and women human rights defenders can freely engage in their legitimate work and create an enabling environment for women human rights defenders.

Women and girls with disabilities

47. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The lack of information on the gendered impact of the law that dissolved the National Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities currently before the Legislative Assembly;

(b) The high rate of poverty among women with disabilities and the lack of information on the implementation and monitoring of the employment quota mandated by the Special Act on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities;

(c) The limited participation of women and girls with disabilities in decision-making on policies and strategies to promote equal opportunities between women and men, particularly in access to justice, protection from gender-based violence, accessible and inclusive education and employment.

48. Recalling its general recommendation No. 18 (1991) on disabled women, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure a gender assessment of the impact of the law dissolving the National Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities;

(b) Ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the employment quota mandated through the Special Act on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, with specific attention to women with disabilities, and adopt targeted measures to address the high rate of poverty among women with disabilities;

(c) Ensure the inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in decision-making on policies and strategies to promote equal opportunities, including in relation to access to justice, protection from gender-based violence, accessible and inclusive education and employment.

Climate change and disaster risk reduction

49. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The lack of women's equal representation in the development of legislation, policies and programmes on climate change mitigation and adaptation, climate financing, disaster response and disaster risk reduction, and the insufficient information on women's involvement in the development and implementation of nationally determined contributions and climate mitigation strategies;

(b) The lack of meaningful consultation with women displaced and affected by climate change, despite the recognition by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of "the right to not be forcibly displaced" as one of the human rights particularly affected by climate change;

(c) The limited participation of women climate defenders in climate finance negotiations and in bilateral and multilateral negotiations on developed States' due diligence obligations regarding climate change.

50. In accordance with its general recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change, the Committee recommends that the State Party review its climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies, taking into account the negative effects of climate change on the livelihoods of women, and ensure that women and men are equally represented in the development, adoption and implementation of legislation, policies and programmes on climate change, disaster response and disaster risk reduction, in particular by:

(a) **Increasing climate change and disaster risk management literacy and awareness among women and girls to enable their effective participation in climate change-related decision-making and the development of adaptation strategies and actions that build women's and girls' resilience to the impact of climate change;**

(b) **Establishing effective mechanisms to ensure meaningful consultation with and participation of women displaced and affected by climate change in all climate-related decision-making;**

(c) **Ensuring the participation of women climate defenders, women climate attorneys and women's organizations in all climate finance negotiations and bilateral and multilateral negotiations on climate change, including on developed States' obligations to provide financial and technological support, ensuring that women's expertise and perspectives inform the State Party's advocacy for climate justice.**

Marriage and family relations

51. The Committee notes with concern:

(a) The persistence of early unions (before the age of 18), affecting approximately one in five women now aged 20–24, particularly in rural areas, ranging from formal marriage to informal cohabitation, bypassing legal protections and often involving significantly older men, which exposes girls to coercion, exploitation and heightened child marriage risks;

(b) While de facto unions and formal equality of rights are recognized in the Family Code, obstacles persist for women, particularly regarding property division, maintenance, inheritance, social benefits after the dissolution of marriage, and structural barriers limiting the effective exercise of rights after divorce;

(c) The lack of recognition of same-sex marriage and unions, denying women in same-sex relationships equivalent legal protection in family matters, and that lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, unlike single women, are denied the right to adopt children and, inter alia, cannot pass on citizenship to adopted children;

(d) The absence of specific recognition of and clear protocols to identify situations where violence is exercised against children to harm the mother, particularly in the context of separation, despite the existence of the Special Comprehensive Act on a Violence-free Life for Women.

52. **Recalling its general recommendations No. 21 (1994) on equality in marriage and family relations and No. 29 (2013) on the economic consequences of marriage, family relations and their dissolution, and joint general recommendation No. 31/general comment No. 18 on harmful practices, as revised, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Prevent and address early and forced unions, women's exploitation in unions with significant age differences and the risk of child marriage, in particular in rural areas;**

(b) **Ensure the effective implementation of the legal framework on de facto unions and divorce to guarantee women's equal rights in property division, maintenance, custody, and access to social benefits, eliminate structural barriers, including economic dependency and gender stereotypes, and provide disaggregated data to assess implementation;**

(c) **Recognize same-sex marriage and unions, ensure equal rights to legal protection and family life for all couples without discrimination, including the right to adopt children, and amend legislation to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, inter alia, in adoption and citizenship transmission, ensuring equal citizenship rights to all children, including those of lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex mothers;**

(d) **Develop protocols to identify and prevent gender-based violence against children to harm the mother and ensure that family and criminal courts suspend or restrict contact where such a risk exists.**

Data collection and analysis

53. The Committee notes with concern the absence of data collection in many areas relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

54. **The Committee recommends that the State Party promote and build capacity for the use of the most appropriate technology in the collection of statistical data, including on the prevalence of gender-based violence against women and trafficking in women and girls, access to education and the socioeconomic status of women, disaggregated by age, ethnicity, race and disability, for the design and implementation of tailored and gender-responsive legislation, policies, programmes and budgets.**

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

55. **Following the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Committee calls upon the State Party to reaffirm its implementation and to re-evaluate the realization of the rights enshrined in the Convention in order to achieve substantive equality between women and men.**

Dissemination

56. **The Committee requests the State Party to ensure the timely dissemination of the present concluding observations, in the official language of the State Party, to the relevant State institutions at all levels (national, regional and local), in particular to the Government, the Legislative Assembly and the judiciary, to enable their full implementation.**

Ratification of other treaties

57. **The Committee notes that the adherence of the State Party to the nine major international human rights instruments¹ would enhance the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in all aspects of life. The Committee therefore encourages the State Party to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which it is not yet a Party.**

¹ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Follow-up to concluding observations

58. The Committee requests the State Party to provide, within two years, written information on the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 14, 24 (f), 38 (b) and 44 (a) above.

Preparation of the next report

59. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the eleventh periodic report of the State Party in line with a future clear and regularized schedule for reporting by States Parties (General Assembly resolution [79/165](#), para. 6) and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State Party. The next periodic report should cover the entire period up to the time of its submission.

60. The Committee requests the State Party to follow the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (see [HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#), chap. I).
