



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Ninety-first session

Summary record of the 2165th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 26 June 2025, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Haidar

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

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

Fifth periodic report of Chad (continued) (CEDAW/C/TCD/5; CEDAW/C/TCD/Q/5; CEDAW/C/TCD/RQ/5)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Chad joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair** invited the delegation to continue replying to Committee members' questions.

Articles 10–14

3. **A representative of Chad** said that, as part of the process for ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), a workshop had been held to raise awareness of the importance of the Protocol among the relevant agencies, ministries and authorities. The proposal to ratify the Protocol was scheduled for consideration by the Council of Ministers.

4. With regard to the decriminalization of abortion, it was necessary to take into account the social constraints that existed in Chad. The Government could not immediately decriminalize abortion in the way that, for example, Simone Veil had done in France, but it could attempt to raise awareness among the general public and religious leaders of the reasons why decriminalization should be considered. The process would be difficult and it was not possible to say when it might be achieved. However, the Government acknowledged that it must be achieved at some point in the future.

5. **Ms. Tisheva** said that she would urge the Government not to delay in giving women the right to make decisions about their bodies. Women must be free to decide for themselves and must be given the legal and negotiating tools that they needed to achieve that freedom. In compliance with the Convention, they must be granted the right to participate in decision-making in all spheres and at all levels of political life.

6. **Ms. Akia** said that the State Party must take urgent measures to reduce the very high maternal mortality rate in Chad.

7. **Ms. Eghobamien-Mshelia** said that she wished to know whether the national accounting and statistics systems, and macroeconomic and fiscal policies, assigned value to women's unpaid labour, including caregiving. She wondered what measures were taken to recognize and assess the value of unpaid care and work in the home, which was predominantly performed by women.

8. She would welcome data, disaggregated by type of vulnerability, sector and geographic location, on women beneficiaries of the National Microfinance Strategy. It would be useful to know whether there was a database of women recipients of business grants that could be used as a guide in reforming measures to promote financial inclusion and in developing tailored collateral-free products and e-commerce platforms for women-owned micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those operating in the country's core economic sectors. It would be interesting to hear about any mechanisms for ensuring women's equal access to financial services, including loans, mortgages and other forms of credit.

9. She would like to know what gender-responsive measures were being implemented to address the limited availability of electricity, renewable energy, Internet and technological tools and to reduce the digital gender gap. She would appreciate details of any cash transfer or subsidy programmes set up to support women living in poverty, women in informal employment, rural women, women with disabilities, forcibly displaced women and women with care responsibilities as mothers or heads of household. Information on the intended scope and reach of the National Social Protection Strategy for 2022–2026 would also be welcome. In addition, it would be useful to learn what kind of model served as the basis for the Strategy and whether it was linked to national development planning. She would be grateful to receive data on any safety nets, buffers or social benefits in place in the State

Party, disaggregated by the beneficiaries' sex, employment status, employment sector and disability or other disadvantage.

10. Lastly, she wondered what measures were being taken to expand women's participation in leadership roles in sports and whether any capacity-building programmes received dedicated funding to enhance women's leadership in grassroots sports and recreational management. What steps were taken to create sports infrastructure and promote the inclusion of women in sport?

11. **A representative of Chad** said that the Government gathered, processed and disseminated quantitative and qualitative data relating to women. The new information system for the protection of women and children, which was currently being validated, would constitute an additional source of data. The Government had also developed the first country gender profile for Chad, in partnership with the African Development Bank.

12. The Government had collaborated with the International Labour Organization and the Islamic Development Bank to set up a mechanism for providing women with interest-free loans. In partnership with the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the PARCA project had been established to issue cash transfers to refugees and host communities. Around 800,000 households had benefited from the project, the majority headed by women.

13. Networks of women ministers and parliamentarians promoted women's empowerment. Consultation mechanisms had been established for women living in rural areas, along with an action plan and strategy to support them. Discussions were taking place with the Ministry of Finance and Budget with a view to setting up a finance project for rural women. In collaboration with the non-governmental organization (NGO) CARE International, the Government had set up village-level savings and credit associations in all 23 provinces.

14. The Government had adopted a national child protection policy, an action plan and implementing decrees to support children, including abandoned and unaccompanied children, and children in conflict with the law.

15. **A representative of Chad** said that the National Social Protection Strategy for the period 2022–2026 was intended to improve women's access to social security. Campaigns to raise community leaders' awareness of the gendered division of labour had been conducted in a number of provinces. Community and traditional leaders were given ongoing training on gender issues, with a focus on the distribution of domestic tasks within families. Clubs for husbands and future husbands had been set up to discuss issues surrounding the division of labour in the home, which was strongly influenced by social and cultural constraints. Steps were being taken to ensure that women's work in the home was recognized.

16. **A representative of Chad** said that the Government had built a large number of water towers and boreholes to improve access to water for rural women and girls. It had also established an agency for the development of renewable energy, which had enabled many women to set up small machines for processing local products in rural areas.

17. The local branches of the national consultation framework for rural women facilitated women's participation in a wide range of processes, for instance as part of National Women's Week. Over the previous four years, in partnership with United Nations agencies, the Government had organized campaigns to raise awareness of issues surrounding the restoration of peace and to disseminate the national plan of action for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. He wished to call on the international community to support the Government in its efforts to deal with the huge numbers of refugees that were entering Chad from neighbouring countries.

18. **A representative of Chad** said that women's sports had not formerly been developed in Chad. In recent years, however, a department for women's sports had been set up within the Ministry of Youth and Sport, and women's sports were being promoted in all schools. Stadiums located in the capital would be used to encourage the development of women's sports.

19. **A representative of Chad** said that the Government had recently examined a bill submitted by the Ministry of Youth and Sport for the construction of sports stadiums in large cities, especially in N'Djamena.

20. **Ms. Eghobamien-Mshelia** said that it was still not clear to the Committee whether the national accounting and statistics systems assigned value to women's unpaid work, whether support was given to women-owned companies operating in the country's core economic sectors or what kind of model was used as the basis for the social protection system. She wondered what forms of support were provided to women who fell outside the scope of the formal development framework.

21. **A representative of Chad** said that the Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Women and Early Childhood, in partnership with the National Institute of Statistics, had set up a database that would contain data on health, women and children in Chad, collected through the demographic and health survey. In addition, a report and statistical data on women in Chad had been published. More than 70 per cent of women worked in agriculture and all weekly and cross-border markets were supplied by women. A national chamber of women entrepreneurs had been launched. The Government had established a mechanism to facilitate multisectoral coordination with regard to the National Social Protection Strategy for 2022–2026. All vulnerable people, especially women, would be taken into account. Chad was one of the first countries to have begun gathering data on vulnerable persons. A general population census had recently been launched.

22. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis**, noting that women in Chad were responsible for up to 80 per cent of food production but owned only 30 per cent of the land, said that she wished to know what measures could be taken to combat cultural norms that militated against women's land ownership and whether it was possible for women to thrive under the existing laws. Given that women's collectives were helping women to gain access to land, it would be interesting to know what could be done to expand such collectives. She wondered whether measures would be taken to harmonize customary laws and statutory laws to ensure that the former were not used to hinder women's right to own land. It would be useful to know whether e-vouchers for seeds, drone-based crop monitoring and other technological solutions could be used to modernize agriculture and thus support women farmers.

23. In view of the high level of vulnerability of internally displaced persons to extreme weather events, she would like to know what steps the State Party was taking to implement the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention). The delegation might comment on the situation of women with disabilities, who did not enjoy any specific protection under Act No. 007/PR/2007 on the protection of persons with disabilities. Lastly, she wondered whether women were playing a leading role in the formulation of policies to tackle desertification, which was one of the key causes of food insecurity and violence in the Lake Chad region.

24. **A representative of Chad** said that a bill on the institutionalization of women's access to land had been approved at a recent cabinet meeting and would shortly be submitted to the Council of Ministers and then the National Assembly for adoption. The bill would create more opportunities for women in urban and rural areas to obtain their own land by providing for the establishment of quotas to ensure that a certain proportion of the plots available in land attribution processes were assigned to women.

25. The activities of the terrorist group Boko Haram had transformed the Lake Chad region into a conflict zone. The situation had been compounded by the impact of climate change, which had led to a significant reduction in the size of the lake and, in turn, the outbreak of conflicts among the different agricultural communities in the region. Weapons from Libya and the Sudan, with which Chad shared a border, continued to circulate throughout the country. The Government was constantly working to address that situation, including by reactivating a body responsible for recovering weapons and preventing access to them. Such efforts would improve women's safety by ensuring that weapons could not be obtained by groups who wished to use them to settle even the most minor disputes.

26. Work to combat desertification was led by the Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries and Sustainable Development. Women continued to play a significant role by planting and

maintaining trees in various areas across the country, including the capital city. The Ministry was provided with funds with which to pay the women for their efforts.

27. **A representative of Chad** said that a study had shown that more than 52 per cent of the population had access to drinking water. The ministry established to deal specifically with water issues was working to equip boreholes with hand-operated pumps and build water towers in all the country's provinces.

28. **A representative of Chad** said that significant progress had been made with regard to improving respect by traditional authorities for women's property rights. The Government had worked with Oxfam International to develop inclusive land administration projects, and the Property Code was being revised to make it more inclusive.

29. The National Agency for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of People Living with Disabilities, which was run by persons with disabilities themselves, had been established in June 2023. Discrimination against students with disabilities was prohibited by Act No. 007/PR/2007, which also exempted such students from the payment of school enrolment fees. The Ministry of Finance and Budget had earmarked funds specifically for measures to ensure that women with disabilities enjoyed all their rights. The Government had joined forces with the United Nations Population Fund to launch initiatives to promote the socioeconomic integration of such women, who were entitled to receive ongoing support from social workers. The authorities had also received assistance from the Turkish International Cooperation Agency in manufacturing and distributing motorized mobility tricycles that would facilitate the lives of all persons with disabilities. A number of women with disabilities held elected office.

30. **A representative of Chad** said that, at the beginning of the transition phase, the Government had worked with its partners to establish a programme to support weapon recovery efforts.

31. **A representative of Chad** said that one of the key steps taken to give effect to the Kampala Convention at the national level had been the adoption of Act No. 12/PT/2023 on protection and assistance for internally displaced persons.

32. **A representative of Chad** said that the Government recognized the pressing need to fully implement its climate adaptation plan in order to boost efforts to address desertification and the conflicts caused by that phenomenon.

33. **A representative of Chad** said that the Ministry of Women and Early Childhood and the Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries and Sustainable Development had established a joint committee tasked with incorporating a gender dimension into the climate adaptation plan. A workshop for the validation of the plan's gender-related content would be held shortly. The authorities were aware that climate change hit women and children hardest and were running programmes to raise awareness of the need to protect the environment and to build individuals' capacity to contribute to efforts to that end, such as those aimed at preventing the illegal felling of trees.

34. **Ms. de Silva de Alwis** said that she wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to implement the policies set out in the document entitled "Vision 2030, the Chad we want", in particular those relating to the redistribution of financial resources to persons with disabilities. She wondered, too, whether the State Party would consider decriminalizing homosexuality and whether it had introduced any alternatives to pretrial detention, in line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (the Tokyo Rules).

35. **Ms. Akia** said that, in view of allegations of poor conditions in prisons, it would be helpful to know what the State Party was doing to ensure compliance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules). It had been reported that women human rights defenders faced violence, threats and intimidation and had limited access to justice; the delegation might confirm whether such reports were correct and, if so, explain what steps were being taken to protect the women concerned. Lastly, she wished to know what was

being done to ensure that counter-terrorism laws were not used to undermine the work of women human rights defenders.

36. **A representative of Chad** said that a draft bill on the protection of human rights defenders had been prepared with support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Human rights organizations would soon be invited to attend a workshop for the validation of the final draft. Most women prisoners were held in the country's main prisons in N'Djamena and the southern regions. Commissions had been set up to improve conditions in detention facilities and examine whether it might be possible for certain detainees, in particular women and children, to benefit from non-custodial measures. Efforts were being made to raise awareness among prison staff of all United Nations standards on the treatment of prisoners. The matter of decriminalizing homosexuality would have to be given careful consideration before any steps in that direction could be taken.

37. **A representative of Chad** said that the African Development Bank had provided financing for efforts to update the school curriculum, as part of which content on climate change and gender had been incorporated. Information on the new curriculum had been sent to staff in middle and upper secondary schools, who would begin teaching the content at the start of the next academic year.

38. **A representative of Chad** said that the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights had established a programme to manage medical care for detainees.

Articles 15 and 16

39. **Ms. González Ferrer** said that she would like to know what steps the State Party had taken to enforce the new provisions of the Constitution that prohibited forced marriage, child marriage and polygamy. The delegation might explain what was being done to address the inconsistencies between the State Party's civil law and customary law in the area of inheritance and indicate whether steps had been taken to ensure that widows enjoyed legal protection and inherited a fair share of their husband's assets. She would welcome information on any measures introduced to give effect to a recent proposal that, in cases in which a man chose to divorce his wife without having valid reasons for doing so, the woman should be permitted to remain in the family home with their children.

40. It would be helpful to know what protocols and mechanisms were in place to guarantee the protection of victims of domestic violence, including any children who had witnessed it, during divorce proceedings and ensure that mediation proceedings were conducted in accordance with the standards set out in the Convention. She wondered whether the State Party intended to adopt legislation on the family court system, and what had been done to support the effective application within communities of the laws governing marriage and family relations.

41. **A representative of Chad** said that the adoption of the country's national strategy to combat gender-based violence, the action plan for the implementation of that strategy and the road map against child marriage and female genital mutilation demonstrated that there was the political will necessary to tackle those phenomena. The data produced by the Government and its partners showed that its efforts were bearing fruit.

42. **A representative of Chad** said that a strategic communications plan had been developed to raise public awareness and facilitate the implementation of the national strategy to combat gender-based violence and the road map against child marriage and female genital mutilation.

43. **A representative of Chad** said that the Ministry of Women and Early Childhood had provided training on child marriage to criminal investigation officers and traditional authorities. Cases of child marriage were immediately reported to the judicial authorities, who then took the appropriate steps.

44. **A representative of Chad** said that marriage was a consensual act. Practices with respect to polygamy varied among the religious communities. It was not possible to simply eliminate polygamy by means of a law. The issue should perhaps be put to the public in order to determine how to proceed.

45. The idea that, following a divorce, the man should in certain circumstances have to leave the family home had perhaps been a joke or an idea mentioned at a gathering and then circulated on social media; there had never been any such official proposal. The Ministry of Women had recently held a meeting on the draft family code for all stakeholders, and most of the concerns that had previously prevented the code's adoption had been addressed. Matters relating to a woman's inheritance upon the death of her spouse were generally resolved according to custom. If, however, the custom was found to be contrary to the law, it would be disregarded by the judge.

46. **Ms. González Ferrer** said that she wondered whether the delegation could provide specific examples of any steps being taken by the State Party to work with families and in communities to combat child and forced marriage and de facto unions involving children. It would be helpful to know how the State Party handled cases of gender-based violence in which a woman's children were subjected to violence to increase the harm to her. She would welcome a response to her question regarding mediation proceedings.

47. **A representative of Chad** said that it was an offence under the Criminal Code to inflict physical or psychological harm on another person, even by means of insults, and the person inflicting such harm was liable to prosecution and punishment. Any person believing him- or herself to be a victim of such conduct could file a criminal complaint. Local prosecutors could file charges upon becoming aware of a situation where such harm had been inflicted, even in the absence of a complaint from the victim. For example, following reports that a woman had been tied up and tortured in the desert, law enforcement officers had been able to arrest three of the perpetrators and bring them before the courts.

48. **A representative of Chad** said that, under the laws of Chad, minor children automatically remained with their mother following a divorce, provided that she was able to provide for them. If the judge determined that she was not, the father could be given custody.

49. **The Chair** said that, in the light of the delegation's comments regarding the difficulty of implementing legislation in a context where there were multiple religious communities, with practices that might run counter to the law being proposed, she wished to draw its attention to the "Faith for Rights" framework and toolkit developed by OHCHR, which addressed the need for dialogue with religious leaders.

50. **A representative of Chad** said that his Government was relentless in its efforts to eliminate discrimination against women, but it recognized that there were both internal and external factors that limited the effectiveness of its measures to promote women's socioeconomic advancement. He was certain that the Committee's concluding observations would spur further efforts to include women at all levels of government. He wished to invite the Committee to undertake a country visit to Chad so that it might better understand the situation of the women of Chad, the Government's efforts and the challenges to be met.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.