



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Exceptional session

Summary record of the 574th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 8 August 2002, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Abaka

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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)

Second periodic report of the Czech Republic (continued) (CEDAW/C/CZE/2; CEDAW/PSWG/2002/EXC/CRP.2/Add.9)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr. Fuchs, Ms. Snajdrová, Mr. Schorm, Ms. Stefová (Czech Republic) took places at the Committee table.*

Articles 1 to 6 (continued)

2. **Mr. Fuchs** (Czech Republic), responding to questions raised under article 5 relating to the mass media and proposed legislative amendments, said that although in former times the mass media had been subject to censorship, more recently the Government had been working in partnership with the press, with full respect for their independence. Through broadcasting councils, press conferences and television and radio appearances, the Government sought to influence the treatment of gender issues by the mass media and promote the concept of equal opportunity.

3. In connection with the housing of migrants and other refugees, he noted that there were approximately 30 subsidized safe shelters (asylum houses) providing refuge for mothers and other persons in need. Increase of Government support to safe shelters had been the subject of recent discussions and it was decided that the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in cooperation with other authorities, would conduct research on the number of such facilities and on their funding and operations. The Government was prepared to formulate new policy on the allocation of resources based on the results of such analysis.

4. **Ms. Snajdrová** (Czech Republic) said that since 1999, the Czech Ministry of the Interior had established that existing legislation could not effectively deal with the prevalence of prostitution. However, the legislative council had raised the objection that proposals which had been drafted for action against prostitution would contravene earlier obligations undertaken by the Czech Republic. The Government had therefore requested legal experts to study the matter and to recommend appropriate solutions. It was expected that the ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational

Organized Crime and accession to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, by December 2002, would facilitate the adoption of relevant action to regulate prostitution.

5. **Mr. Schorm** (Czech Republic), referring to criminal proceedings against the perpetrators of sex crimes, said that incest was punishable under the Penal Code by up to 2 years' imprisonment. Although that appeared to be a light sentence, he explained that in the Czech Republic an offence could be characterized as several crimes, thereby incurring the most severe penalty possible.

6. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said that incest was one of the worst forms of rape. Alluding to apparent ambiguities in the reporting State's response, she sought further clarification on how Czech legislation actually punished incest.

Articles 7 to 9

7. **Ms. Livingstone Raday** expressed concern at the considerable gap between the high qualifications of women and their lack of visibility in political and public life at high-level decision-making positions. There was a contrast between executive political posts in the Cabinet and regional authorities on the one hand, and professional public posts, in which women were prominent. A problematic pyramid of promotion seemed to pervade sectors such as the judiciary, in which 66 per cent of district court judges were women, yet only 25 per cent of Supreme Court judges were women.

8. It was clear that the delegation fully appreciated how important it was that both men and women occupy decision-making positions, and the report had acknowledged that equal access to high positions had been slow. Although government departments had been encouraged to incorporate positive and affirmative methods, many had failed to understand the task at hand. Was this failure due to a lack of clarity in establishing the goals, targets and timetables? She wondered whether quotas had been set for women to be listed as political candidates or for appointments to public committees and advisory boards. She also asked whether the promotion of women in areas where they were underrepresented was one of the anticipated reforms, especially in situations where they held qualifications equal to those of male candidates.

9. She asked the delegation to reconsider earlier remarks to the effect that age discrimination was more critical than sex discrimination. Both forms of discrimination deserved attention, but she ventured to suggest that sex discrimination aggravated age discrimination and that older women were among the most disadvantaged members of society.

10. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** noted that although the number of women in political life was still low, the rise from 4 to 7 women in the chamber of deputies was reassuring. Referring to paragraph 58 of the report which stated that men had apparently been given preference in the 1998 local authority elections, she pointed out that over 50 per cent of women were elected from the lists of independent candidates. Consequently, she marvelled at the conclusion that ultimately, the representation of women had been due to women's lack of interest in active participation in political life. In her opinion, the exclusion of women from political lists reflected a general pattern in many political parties, not restricted to the Czech Republic, and that such stereotypes were linked to biased attitudes which preserved political parties as male strongholds. The results achieved by the women running for posts as independent candidates clearly showed that civil society was thriving in the Czech Republic and that women, given an opportunity, could attain much support in elections. She therefore asked what measures were envisaged to address the perpetuation of stereotypes and sex roles within political parties.

11. **Ms. Manalo** noted that the Czech Republic was proud to represent a model of participatory democracy in Eastern Europe, and could be expected to nourish and encourage the development of the media and non-governmental organizations as two major tools for the spread of democracy. She wondered how many women participated in the decision-making processes in the State-run and private media and whether there were any statistics available on the subject. In addition she was curious to know whether there was any form of collaboration between the Government and the private sector media which could encourage women to seek key positions and thereby create a culture within media circles which was more receptive to gender equality policies.

12. She drew attention to reports that 70 per cent of persons working for non-governmental organizations were women, and asked how many of them held

leadership positions, whether those organizations served as grass-roots consultative groups, and who influenced the formulation of policies and various laws passed on gender equality.

13. **Mr. Fuchs** (Czech Republic) said that in the next report, his Government would seek to clarify any outstanding ambiguities on the penalties for rape and incest.

14. With regard to women's participation in political life, he said that as civil servants, it would be difficult for members of his delegation to account for the actions of political parties. There were no laws regulating the participation of women in politics, but through the Council for Equal Opportunity, the Government sought to exert a certain degree of influence in the promotion of women in public life, following the example of successful Eastern and Western European neighbours.

15. It had been difficult to enforce a system of quotas thus far because some political parties deemed it unacceptable to legislate the establishment of quotas. That position was a reaction to earlier Czech regimes which had adhered to quotas with results that were counterproductive. The recommendations of the Committee in that regard would be welcome.

16. Similarly, there were no quotas set for representation in public committees and public administration. Statistical data had shown that the situation varied between ministries, but the general policy was that government departments were strongly encouraged to fill vacancies with suitably qualified women wherever possible. There was still resistance to that practice as it was believed that qualifications, and not gender, should be the decisive factor in recruitment.

17. He pointed out that the proportionately lower number of women in higher levels of the judiciary, referred to by Ms. Livingstone Raday, could be explained by the fact that when several branches of the judiciary were transferred to the city of Brno many women chose not to relocate outside Prague.

18. **Mr. Schorm** (Czech Republic) informed the Committee that since women held several high-ranking positions in the judiciary, including the posts of President of the Supreme Court and Prosecutor-General, the hypothesis that women did not occupy a

significant number of high-level positions could not be borne out by the facts.

19. As discussed earlier, even within the judiciary, women appeared to show a preference for certain types of cases and while perhaps those specific areas of legal interest ranked lower on the hierarchy of decision-making, further analysis would determine whether there was an established pattern to those choices.

20. **Mr. Fuchs** (Czech Republic) said that Czech legislation governing the civil service provided that gender balance must be taken into account in the recruitment and promotion of officials to decision-making positions.

21. His comments on the relative seriousness of gender- and age-based discrimination reflected his own experience in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. About 57 per cent of women were economically active, which was a comparatively high figure, and while it was true that, overall, unemployment was slightly higher among women than men, the worst affected group was men aged 50 years or over, who had struggled to find work following the restructuring of heavy industry.

22. Women were not adequately represented in senior positions in the media. For example, over the past decade, the editors-in-chief of every national newspaper had been men. Since most media were privately owned, his Government had few means of influencing the situation, other than through its participation in the Council for Czech Television and the analogous bodies for radio and the print media whose functions he had described earlier. It was to be hoped that, as attitudes shifted, more women would gain advancement. With stereotypes so deeply rooted, however, that process might take an entire generation.

Articles 10-14

23. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling**, referring to the delegation's responses to the questions posed under articles 1-9, said that, in order to address the problem of stereotypical or degrading depictions of women in the media and in advertising, the Government should consider establishing self-regulatory bodies which would hear complaints. Such arrangements had worked effectively in other countries, without impinging on the independence of the media.

24. There was a need for harsher sanctions against ministries that did not comply with the recommendations of the Government Council for Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. For example, if ministries did not carry out gender impact analyses before submitting draft laws to the Cabinet, as recommended by the Council, the texts should be sent back to the relevant ministries without being considered. She remained concerned that, under the Criminal Code, rape was defined as using force to coerce another person into sexual intercourse, whereas the focus should be on the issue of consent.

25. In connection with articles 10-14, she noted that the report cited several instances in which the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value was being violated. She asked what was being done to ensure that the relevant legislation was enforced, and whether the definition of remuneration complied with the relevant International Labour Organization norms under which remuneration encompassed both pay and benefits; whether the job classification system had been examined for gender bias; and what measures were planned to eliminate pay disparities between male- and female-dominated sectors of the labour market. She also wished to know whether the Government had established a mechanism to monitor enforcement of the newly amended Employment Act, in particular the provisions prohibiting job advertisements directed towards one sex.

26. It appeared that the State party had adopted an incremental approach to addressing inequalities in the labour market. However, little progress would be made merely by introducing non-binding regulations. There was a need for mandatory measures, including numerical targets and timetables for achieving them, and the public sector should take the lead.

27. **Ms. Livingstone Raday** said that the State party's employment legislation was progressive and appeared to satisfy the requirements of the Convention. The problem lay in the area of enforcement. The current situation was far from satisfactory: unemployment was rising faster among women than men, women's average remuneration was less than 75 per cent of that of men, there was considerable vertical segregation in the labour market, and certain categories of women, including those aged 60 years or over and Roma women, were particularly disadvantaged.

28. She was therefore concerned that so few women had brought cases of employment-related discrimination before the courts. There was a clear need for institutional prosecution to ensure that standards were enforced. She noted, in that connection, that trade unions, which were entitled to represent their members in such proceedings, were often party to employment-related discrimination against women.

29. A very effective way of enhancing the enforcement of equal opportunities legislation would be the establishment of an independent equal opportunities commission empowered to investigate complaints of discrimination, undertake conciliation, make recommendations and, if those remedies failed, bring cases before the courts. She was concerned that the State party had sought to explain disparities in men's and women's remuneration by citing differences in the structure of women's employment. Research elsewhere had shown that, even after women's differing employment patterns were taken into account, there remained a core disparity between men's and women's pay. The State party should rely on expert job comparisons to determine whether wage discrimination existed on a case-by-case basis.

30. **Ms. Gaspard** said that, while the State party's policy of not differentiating between citizens based on their ethnic origin was to its credit, its failure to collect disaggregated data on the economic, employment, health and educational situation of Roma women made it difficult to meet their specific needs and put them at risk of double discrimination. She would like to know what the role of the Council for Romany Affairs was and whether it had made any proposals to address such problems as Roma women's low rate of labour market participation, currently only 19.1 per cent, and their reluctance to report domestic violence.

31. **Ms. Ačar** said that the State party had not provided sufficient information on the extent and conditions of women's participation in the informal sector. It would be useful to know, for example, what benefits they received, if any, and whether they were entitled to a pension. Many women in Eastern Europe travelled across national borders to engage in so-called "suitcase" trading, and some were subjected to abuse by border guards or exploited by criminal gangs. The State party should collect data on the number of women involved and institute measures to protect their employment and human rights.

32. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** asked why the training to be provided for women returning to the labour market after taking time out to care for a child would be available only to registered job-seekers.

33. **Ms. González Martínez** expressed concern about the high levels of smoking and drug abuse. The number of persons in the age group 15-18 using opiates and cannabis was particularly worrying. She noted that the use of sedatives, including barbiturates, increased with age, particularly among women, and suggested that preventive measures should be taken. The unacceptably high number of abortions indicated that there was a need to improve sex education programmes and to make available to both men and women a wider range of birth control methods.

34. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said that she found the tables on smoking and drug use given in the response to the questions on health (CEDAW/PSWG/2002/EXC/CRP.2/Add.9) very interesting, but in the next report she hoped to see comparative statistics over time, so that trends were apparent. She noted that among women in the 25-34 age group 3.0 per cent of those surveyed were habitual smokers. Although that figure was lower than many countries could boast, it was still cause for concern, since those women were in their prime reproductive age. She noted that women aged 40 and over were far more prone to take sedatives. That finding could reflect careless treatment by physicians, who often prescribed sedatives for menopausal women instead of investigating the causes of their disorders. She was disappointed at the paucity of information provided on mental health programmes. In the responses on health, it was stated that voluntary sterilization was allowed solely for health reasons; it was unfortunate that it was not available as a normal contraceptive method.

35. **Mr. Fuchs** (Czech Republic) said that to his knowledge there was no self-regulatory body for the mass media, but there was self-regulation in the advertising industry. On at least one occasion that he recalled, some offensive billboards had been taken down as a result of industry pressure because they violated the industry code of conduct. Such a code should be established for the mass media.

36. Gender impact analyses were not yet mandatory, but proposals for legislation to that effect were being prepared.

37. The concept of equal pay was defined in the recent amendments to the Labour Code and the Wages and Salaries Act, based on International Labour Organization Convention No. 100 and the European Union equal pay directive. The Labour Code provided that all remuneration, a concept comprising both pay and other employment benefits, must be accorded without discrimination. The Wages and Salaries Act applied solely to wages or salaries as such but made it clear that the principle of equal pay applied not only to the same work but to work of equal value, and it set forth the criteria for determining equal value. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was elaborating a methodology for applying those criteria, to be distributed to all labour offices and to trade unions and employers for use in collective bargaining. It was expected that the amendments would result in better, more transparent job classifications. At present, there was an average pay disparity of 25 per cent between men and women. Based on the experience of other countries, about 10 per cent of that was probably due to outright discrimination. The Ministry had asked its research institute to do an in-depth study of the reasons for the disparity, and the results should be available in the autumn to serve as a basis for further measures.

38. With regard to enforcement, in addition to labour inspections and investigations of complaints of discrimination by the labour offices, the Ministry was trying to encourage trade unions not only to stress equal pay issues in collective bargaining but also to represent individuals in court proceedings. Discriminatory job advertisements had virtually disappeared from the newspapers since they had been banned by the Employment Act. The job of enforcement of the Act fell to the labour offices, which encouraged individuals, trade unions and women's organizations to bring violations to their attention.

39. While local administrations were legally required to adopt measures to promote opportunities for women, there was not yet a counterpart rule in the civil service code. The priorities were a new campaign, and the civil service code would need adjusting.

40. The phenomenon of vertical segregation was due in part to cultural attitudes. Out of a sense of family responsibility, women often refused or did not apply for higher posts that would require them to invest more time in the job, making it harder to combine their professional and family duties, as they understood them.

41. The situation of the eligibility of women wishing to return to the labour force for retraining after maternity or parental leave had been changed by the latest amendment to the Employment Act in May 2002.

42. It was difficult to gather statistics on how many Roma women were employed because the labour offices did not keep records by ethnic minority. Recording ethnic origin, unless it was self-identified, was considered a violation of privacy under Czech law. In the recent census, only some 10,000 persons had identified themselves as Roma, whereas it was estimated that there were about 300,000 people of Roma ethnic origin in the country. Nonetheless, there was a comprehensive national programme to support the Roma minority because of their low employability and low educational level and their overall system of values.

43. The Government's goal was to provide all citizens with a good education and to help minorities integrate into the general society through, for example, pre-school courses in the Czech language and the presence of Roma assistants in the classrooms. The Ministry of Labour had special programmes to support the employability of people with special problems, including the Roma, both women and men. There were signs that the new generation recognized that higher education meant a higher standard of living, and there were many more Roma young people in secondary education than there had been 10 years earlier.

44. **Ms. Štefová** (Czech Republic), answering questions on health, said that the top three causes of death in the country, in descending order, were diseases of the circulatory system, malignant tumours and injury or poisoning. Life expectancy at birth was rising for both men and women at a faster pace than in other Eastern European countries. The most significant improvement in health indicators was that infant and neonatal mortality rates had dropped to the level of the most developed European Union countries. On the other hand, the incidence of chronic diseases, such as diabetes and respiratory disorders, and the incidence of malignant tumours were both on the increase. While deaths due to cancer had stayed at about the same level among men in recent years, among women there had been a gradual increase.

45. To deal with the problem would surely entail higher budgets. Expansion of screening programmes was needed. Haemocult tests every two years for men

and women over 40 had been legislated and were fully covered by insurance. The Ministry of Health had been given a substantial budget allocation to improve the quality of preventive care, with special emphasis on technical equipment for gastroenterology outpatient clinics. Through its colorectal screening programme, the Ministry of Health was seeking to increase the access of high-risk groups to colonoscopy. It was also about to launch an updated mammography screening programme, with an examination every two years, for women aged 47 to 69. Cervical screening had been introduced many years ago.

46. There had been a significant reduction in abortions thanks to greater availability and use of modern, effective contraceptives, including hormonal contraceptives prescribed by a physician, even though health insurance paid only a small part of the cost. Support for planned parenthood was one of the areas of the National Health Programme, including promotion of contraceptive use, education on the risks of abortion (with emphasis on performing it within eight weeks of conception) and outreach on the value of postponing a first pregnancy until the age of legal maturity. The National Health Programme also supported the family planning and crisis services offered by the Society for Family Planning and Sex Education, a non-governmental organization.

47. The law currently governing sterilization dated from 1966 and provided that it must be voluntary and could be performed only for health reasons. However, professional associations and non-governmental organizations were pushing for an amendment that would allow sterilization, at a patient's request, for other reasons, including contraception. The bill incorporating that change was currently in the comment phase of the legislative process.

48. Referring to the tables contained in the written responses to the list of issues (CEDAW/PSWG/2002/EXC/CRP.2/Add.9), she said that trends in smoking and drug and alcohol consumption were unsatisfactory. Czech society's highly tolerant attitude to alcohol consumption did nothing to dissuade young people from taking up the habit, with many women included in the risk group. Among the 11-year-old population, 85 per cent of boys and 80 per cent of girls had had some experience of alcohol. A report was in the course of preparation for the purpose of proposing effective tools to provide

better support and prevent adolescents from consuming those and other addictive substances.

49. On the subject of mental health care, psychiatric problems accounted for approximately 3 per cent of health complaints. Care was provided for chronic patients, although most complaints were episodic rather than continuous. Many types of services and working methods used in the developed countries were not regularly applied, if indeed they were known, in the Czech Republic. Because the general reform of the health-care system had not solved that specific problem a nation-wide discussion, coordinated by the Psychiatric Society, was under way to formulate a special mental health-care programme.

50. The new conception stressed care that met regional and community needs for social and occupational rehabilitation. It also stressed linking bed and ambulatory care and developing out-patient facilities for crisis cases. Home care agencies in some areas were beginning to contribute to psychiatric care, and a study was currently under way with a view to providing ambulatory care, developing psychiatric departments in general hospitals and reducing the number of beds in large mental hospitals. Pilot projects were being implemented in several localities with a view to improving psychiatric care.

51. **Mr. Fuchs** (Czech Republic), replying to a question from Ms. Aşar, said that informal work pertained more to the shadow economy, which had not existed 10 years previously and which the authorities were endeavouring to eliminate. The sector comprised mostly men, mostly construction workers, and mostly illegal immigrants. An inter-ministerial commission, working in cooperation with the executive agencies of the relevant ministries, monitored construction sites in an attempt to prohibit such work. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs was amending the Labour Code to cover atypical work contracts with a view to making them part of regular contracts, thus entitling the workers to social security and labour protection.

52. Earlier attempts to regulate prostitution had failed, but it was hoped that such obstacles as the opposition of some political parties to regulating and, hence, legalizing prostitution would be overcome. He could not say the proposed draft Act on Prostitution, which was intended to protect both prostitutes and other sectors of society, would be passed. Prostitution was closely linked to international organized crime,

and Czech prostitutes were used by tourists from the neighbouring areas of Germany. However, the Czech police, in cooperation with their German counterparts, were striving to eliminate at least child prostitution and forced prostitution of women, promote the use of contraceptives and provide other types of support. The authorities would give an account of progress in the country's next periodic report.

Articles 15 and 16

53. **Ms. Cui**, noting that in recent years the Czech Republic had done a great deal of work on legislation on family law, asked what principles had guided the authorities in their 1998 amendment of the Family Act and how it had affected marriage law. She would like to know which aspects of the Act had been changed, which had been strengthened and which had filled previous lacunae. She wished to know whether the Government had consulted women's associations and non-governmental organizations in connection with the amendment and, since men allegedly felt themselves discriminated against with regard to custody of children in the context of divorce, whether they too had been consulted.

54. She asked what percentage of divorce cases were brought as a result of domestic violence and wondered why in the amendment of the law, as stated in the report (para. 140), no account had been taken of the principle of guilt, without which marital property could not be fairly divided. She wondered whether the amendment had strengthened the protection of women and their rights.

55. **Ms. Goonesekere** said that, although the authorities claimed that the family courts upheld the rights for men and women without differentiating between them, other sources claimed that 51 per cent of rapes in the Czech Republic occurred within marriage. She asked whether section 2241 of the Penal Code which provided that any person who engaged in sexual intercourse with force could be charged with rape, included marital rape, and what interface existed between domestic violence and rights in the matrimonial home.

56. Could a woman, for instance, obtain an exclusion order against her husband while herself continuing to live in the matrimonial home? Since, apart from the existence of shelters, no mention had been made of that aspect either in the report or the written responses, she

wondered whether it was being considered for review. She also wished to know how custody was resolved in the courts. It was to be hoped that men's custody rights did not jeopardize those of women and the best interests of the child.

57. **Mr. Schorm** (Czech Republic) said that the principles of the reform of the Family Act, which had been guided, to a great extent, by the child's interests meant that divorce should be based more on subjective elements than on objective ones such as guilt. There was currently a degree of mutual consent in divorce. Whereas in the past it had been necessary for the marriage to have broken down, there were now other possibilities that favoured both spouses and were linked to the need to decide custody of the child prior to the divorce. The 1998 amendment of the Family Act had led to other forms of shared custody or authority; the previous model had more frequently awarded sole custody to one of the spouses. The changes were geared primarily to extending the possibilities that applied to spouses and to judges who pronounced on the dissolution of the marriage.

58. No exception was made of rape within a marriage. Although terms were sometimes interpreted differently, crimes were defined in the Penal Code and rape was always rape, wherever it occurred. He could not say with certainty whether men's and women's organizations had been consulted with regard to the amendment of the Family Act, but since the idea was to achieve balance between men and women, he assumed that it had been done. Although the situation might not yet be totally satisfactory to men, it was for the judges to decide what happened to minors in cases of divorce. He was convinced that their rulings were motivated primarily by the best interests of the child.

59. The Family Act was based on the equality of men and women. While men might appear, statistically, to be discriminated against, court rulings were based on the best interests of the child and on which parent could provide the best possible living conditions. Family violence was not in itself a ground for divorce, although it might be a contributing factor, since violence normally went hand in hand with marital breakdown, which was a ground for divorce.

60. **Ms. Šnajdrová** (Czech Republic) said the authorities were aware of the need to eradicate domestic violence, of which rape was one of the most serious manifestations. A 2001 survey had yielded

alarming results: one out of every eight Czech women had been raped at some time; 10 per cent had been coerced into sexual intercourse with men, one third of them repeatedly. In half the cases the women had been forced by their husbands, 38 per cent by men they knew, and 11 per cent by unknown men. Only three women had made a report to the police, while only one in 10 similar acts against children had been reported. Austrian and German legislation obliged the aggressor in domestic violence to leave the household and forbade all contact with the victim. To adopt similar legislation would entail a thorough and time-consuming revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Act on the Police. Meanwhile, the authorities would at least attempt to revise the Penal Code.

61. **The Chairperson** said that members' remarks would be included in the Committee's concluding comments on the second periodic report of the Czech Republic (CEDAW/C/CZE/2) and she hoped they would be widely disseminated in the local languages and discussed in Parliament, since they involved recommendations the delegation had requested, especially on article 7 of the Convention.

62. The Czech authorities might wish to seek advice from their Swedish counterparts, who, in April 2002, had organized for their ministers, parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations, a workshop on the recommendations contained in the Committee's concluding comments on the country's latest periodic report, in which Committee members had participated. She hoped that the Czech authorities would shortly ratify the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and that it would further strengthen its political will to ensure full implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

63. **Mr. Fuchs** (Czech Republic) thanked the Committee for its part in the constructive dialogue it had had with his delegation and for its understanding for his country's problems. He promised that the Committee's recommendations would be publicized in the Czech Republic and disseminated to all relevant bodies and organizations.

64. **The Chairperson** announced that consideration of the second periodic report of the Czech Republic had been concluded.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.