



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child Seventieth session

### Summary record of the 2028th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 15 September 2015, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Mezmur

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*Fifth periodic report of Bangladesh*

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

**Consideration of reports of States parties (continued)**

*Fifth periodic report of Bangladesh (CRC/C/BGD/5; CRC/C/BGD/Q/5 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Bangladesh took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Afroze** (Bangladesh), introducing the report of Bangladesh, said that there were 61 million children in Bangladesh, accounting for more than a third of the population. Steady progress had been made in terms of reducing the maternal and infant mortality rates and the proportion of people living in poverty had continued to fall, from 38.4 per cent in 2006 to 24.3 per cent in 2015. Per capita income had more than doubled over the same time period. Notwithstanding the global recession, Bangladesh had continued a pattern of economic growth.

3. The Government had committed itself to ensuring children's full development, equal opportunities and future success, and had placed priority on health and education. In that connection, the 2013 Children Act sought to establish and protect children's rights, while the National Children's Policy, adopted in 2011, encapsulated the Government's vision and served as the basis for all other national development policies.

4. The net enrolment ratio for primary school education had risen to 95.4 per cent for boys and 98.18 per cent for girls in 2012. Children received free education, textbooks and grants, while mothers in situations of poverty received food assistance to encourage them to send their children to school rather than resort to early child marriage or child labour. Moreover, an analysis of State expenditure had been conducted to highlight current spending on children and identify areas requiring greater investment. Various ministries, including the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Education, had received funding for improving social welfare, education and health-care services for children.

5. Nationwide, 57,000 preschools had been opened and special preschool curricula and teacher training introduced. State-run children's homes and day-care centres provided health and educational facilities as well as shelter and nutritional meals for children in need. Further initiatives had been implemented for orphans and children with disabilities. In that connection, Bangladesh had spearheaded a United Nations resolution on autism awareness and had launched a major welfare programme, which included monthly allowances and education grants, for children with autism.

6. A countrywide health-care programme was providing nutritional support to expectant mothers, starting from early pregnancy until the child reached 2 years of age, while health-care centres had dedicated units to treat childhood malnutrition. A development programme for the period 2011-2016 had also been introduced to tackle the challenges relating to health, population and nutrition.

7. Cases involving child offenders were fast-tracked in special juvenile courts and children were held in separate facilities to adults. Child labour, trafficking, early marriage and violence against children were critical challenges for the country. The National Child Labour Elimination Policy (2010) and related national plan of action were introduced as part of efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. Concrete action was now being taken to eliminate the 38 hazardous forms of labour identified by the Government. The Prime Minister had personally pledged to end the practice of children marrying under the age of 15 years and 18 years by 2021 and

2041, respectively, and a national plan of action for 2015-2021 had been developed to tackle the root causes of child marriages.

8. It was important to understand that ensuring a promising future for children was no easy task for developing nations. Specialist knowledge would be needed to help Bangladesh to implement its policies. The plight of refugees had recently gained international attention. However, Bangladesh had been hosting a large number of Myanmar refugees for more than three decades without sufficient international commitment to share that burden or find a sustainable solution. The international community now needed to come together to ensure that children from every part of the world had access to the same opportunities.

9. **Mr. Madi** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that the Children Act of 2013 was a major step forward in terms of protecting children and enhancing their rights. Nonetheless, much still remained to be done, including providing training to all personnel responsible for implementing the Act and adopting the much-delayed Education Act.

10. It was surprising that the State party continued to maintain its reservations to article 14, paragraph 1, and article 21 of the Convention, and he invited the delegation to explain why those reservations remained in force and whether there were plans to withdraw them. While welcoming the adoption of the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy, among other initiatives, he said that a lack of resources and permanent structure at the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs prevented it from conducting its monitoring activities. Moreover, since the merging of the National Women's Development Council and the National Children Council, women's issues had taken precedence over matters affecting children. Information on those points would be appreciated.

11. The effectiveness of the National Plan of Action for Children 2005-2010 as a guiding policy document had been compromised by the introduction of competing, and often contradictory, policies. In that connection, he wondered whether the delegation could share the results of the Sixth Five-Year Plan 2011-2015 and provide details of the proposed follow-up plan.

12. While welcoming the establishment of a children's rights committee within the National Human Rights Commission, he said that a lack of financial and human resources hampered the Commission's ability to monitor children's rights violations. In that connection, data on the numbers and outcomes of complaints received by the Commission, as well as the status of the long-delayed draft bill on the children's ombudsman, should be provided.

13. In spite of increases in the budget appropriations for the social sector in nominal terms, there had been an overall decrease in real terms. Funding for social welfare had also been steadily falling and he wondered whether the delegation could explain the reasons behind the funding contradiction. Regarding allegations of fraud within the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, he asked whether any charges had been brought and, if so, what results of the related investigations had been.

14. The lack of reliable disaggregated data was of particular concern, as data was crucial to the successful implementation of the Convention and the Children Act. The identification of priority issues was also a key requirement. While efforts to disseminate information about the Convention were commendable, more needed to be done to widen the scope and coverage of awareness-raising campaigns.

15. The Government's commitment to eradicate child marriage was laudable; however, a significant proportion of girls were still being married when underage. In that connection, he asked for information on the various marriage laws and regulations

in force in the country. He also wished to know what action was being taken by the State party to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility, which, at 9 years of age, was worryingly low.

16. **Ms. Aldoseri** (Country Task Force) said that an initiative linking the country's childhood immunization programme with birth registrations was very encouraging, although the birth registration compliance rate remained extremely low. In that connection, she asked whether the Office of the Registrar General was now up and running; what measures were being taken to tackle the under-registration of births and the root causes thereof; whether mobile registration units were available, particularly in rural areas; and whether there had been any awareness-raising programmes for parents on the importance of birth certification.

17. She congratulated the State party on a radio campaign to raise awareness of a new law intended to protect children from harmful information, broadcasts and marketing practices. The training for adolescents on radio listening and giving feedback on the suitability of children's programming was an outstanding initiative although, sadly, it was not reaching all children, notably those living in poverty or from disadvantaged groups. There were also concerns that the new law might restrict the right to access appropriate information. What measures had been adopted to ensure that all children would have access to such information?

18. The use of corporal punishment in schools, homes and care and justice institutions had not been explicitly prohibited by law and she asked what action was being taken to make corporal punishment an offence and to raise awareness of its negative effects. In that connection, flogging was still permitted as a form of discipline and the Whipping Act of 1909 had yet to be repealed. Information on when the State party intended to bring those laws into line with the Convention should be provided.

19. Lastly, in the light of the existence of multiple ethnic and religious marriage systems and the often fraudulent means used by parents who wished to marry their children off at an early age, she said that a new draft bill investing judges with the authority to allow children to marry was troubling, particularly as it prescribed no minimum age at which such a marriage could be authorized. She urged the State party to give further consideration to the draft bill before its adoption and asked what concrete measures the State party intended to take to combat early and forced marriages and prosecute those who perpetuated that practice.

20. **Ms. Muhamad Shariff** (Country Task Force), referring to article 2 of the Convention, said that in many areas of life in Bangladesh girls continued to face discrimination. For example, in rural areas and slums, access to education for girls was limited, while child marriages prevented many girls from completing their education. A lack of security in schools was cited as a major factor in female dropout rates, and many schools did not have separate toilet facilities for boys and girls. Moreover, only 6 per cent of schools had menstrual management facilities, forcing girls to miss five days of schooling every month. Primary school stipends were too low to effectively remove the economic barriers to education for low-income families.

21. Children with disabilities also faced inequality, as primary and secondary schools were not able to offer inclusive education on account of poor accessibility for children with limited mobility. In addition, teachers lacked the technical capacity necessary for educating such children and there was a general lack of awareness among teachers and students regarding disability issues. She asked whether the State party had carried out a nationwide study on children with disabilities and whether the delegation could provide data on the exact number of such children, broken down by type of disability.

22. Although the Children Act of 2013 touched upon a number of important issues, it did not contain special measures for the protection of indigenous children. The rights of such children were routinely violated in contravention of international instruments and national legislation. For instance, despite promises made by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, such children were still not taught in their native language. They also fell victim to crimes including rape, murder, abduction and torture, attacks on their communities and loss of land. In 2015, two major attacks took place within indigenous communities during which homes were looted and set alight. She asked whether the State party had put in place any protection measures for children from indigenous communities.

23. Dalit children were deprived of access to education, social activities, health and sanitation. Many girls from such communities were also subjected to early marriage, while boys were often forced into child labour. She wondered what steps the Government had taken to stop discrimination against such minority communities.

24. The concept of the best interests of the child had not been defined in national legislation, nor did the State party's report provide an assessment of how that principle was enforced in the country. She asked whether a systematic assessment of the best interests of the child had taken place and how the principle had been interpreted by administrative, legislative and judicial bodies. She also wondered whether the views of children were taken into consideration in administrative and judicial proceedings, particularly in custody cases; whether mechanisms were in place to ensure that the views of children were taken into account in policymaking, especially with respect to children from minority groups; and whether there were Government-sponsored initiatives to promote children's participation in such processes.

25. In matters pertaining to the right to life, survival and development, a number of issues continued to cause concern. For example, the decrease of neonatal mortality and stunting remained slow, malnutrition persisted, many children were dying due to inadequate medical treatment or avoidable accidents, such as fires, drowning and road accidents. Moreover, access to safe water was a challenge, since much of the water in Bangladesh contained levels of arsenic in excess of the permissible amount.

26. **Ms. Afroze** (Bangladesh) said that the Government was working to withdraw the reservation to article 14, paragraph 1. In Bangladesh, parents were able to decide the religion of a child under the age of 18, but, once a child reached the age of 18, he or she could freely decide on religious affiliation. Measures had also been taken by the Government to facilitate withdrawal of the reservation to article 21 through the implementation of the Children Act.

27. With regard to child marriage, a draft of the Child Marriage Restraint Act had recently been completed and was before the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division under the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. In Bangladesh, parents, particularly those living in poverty, wanted their daughters to marry young in order to reduce their financial burden. The Government was taking measures to eradicate poverty, which would, in turn, have a positive impact on the reduction of child marriage. For example, the State offered maternity allowances, food assistance, education stipends and free textbooks, and schooling up to class 12 was free of charge. As for girls who became pregnant under the age of 18, she noted that Bangladeshi society was old-fashioned in that it ostracized single mothers. However, the Government was trying to come up with a solution to the problem through the promotion of education.

28. **Mr. Das** (Bangladesh) said that, as of September 2015, around 85 per cent of all births had been registered in Bangladesh, which was encouraging. If a parent did not register the birth of his or her child within two years, a fee would be imposed. Online

birth registration had been introduced and people in rural areas could also register births through the Union Digital Centre. The Child Rights Committee had thus far received 100 complaints from different bodies, 80 of which had been settled. For instance, as a result of complaints of corporal punishment, one teacher had been suspended, disciplinary action had been taken against another teacher, and one teacher had been obliged to pay compensation to a student.

29. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** said that dowry customs potentially exposed children to ill-treatment. She asked what measures had been taken to change public opinion in that regard. She asked how many complaints submitted to the Child Rights Committee had been filed by children rather than by other parties, how accessible the complaints mechanism was for children, and whether children, particularly those in situations of vulnerability, were aware of its existence.

30. **Ms. Aho Assouma** said that the two-year time frame for birth registration seemed to be overly long. She asked what awareness-raising measures had been taken to encourage parents to register the births of their children.

31. **Ms. Oviedo Fierro** asked what measures had been taken to change attitudes regarding such issues as child marriage. Information on the participation of children in efforts to eliminate violence would be welcome.

32. **Ms. Afroze** (Bangladesh) said that when girls under the age of 18 got married, their dowries were smaller, which explained why child marriage was higher among the poorer segments of the population. The Government had launched a number of initiatives in that regard, such as the Dowry Prohibition Act and awareness-raising programmes. Furthermore, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs had worked with non-governmental organizations to establish a large number of adolescent clubs across the country in which children were sensitized to the dangers of such cultural traditions.

33. **Ms. Begum** (Bangladesh) said that a national helpline was available for children in need of assistance or shelter, and campaigns had been launched by administrative authorities in schools across the country to raise awareness of important children's issues.

34. **Ms. Afroze** (Bangladesh) said that birth registration was not common in the past. The Government would soon be introducing a smart ID card which would further facilitate birth registration. With regard to religious beliefs, Bangladesh was a country where a number of religions were practised but there was no discrimination on grounds of religion.

35. **Ms. Biswas** (Bangladesh) said that consultations on the draft Education Act had been completed and adoption of the draft Act was expected shortly. As far as school dropout rates and school enrolment were concerned, there was no discrimination in the education system. The "Second Chance Education" scheme had been rolled out for 750,000 disadvantaged and ethnic minority children in the 7-14 age group from 90 poor sub-districts. Those children received education at 23,000 learning centres known as "Ananda Schools". In total, 73 formal primary schools for 14,000 urban working children had been established in 64 districts. Work was ongoing to set up 1,500 public primary schools in villages and a further 2,672 schools had been built. School bags, textbooks and stationery had been provided to 166,150 urban working children. Laptop computers, multimedia materials and modems had been distributed to 503 model primary schools. A quota system had been put in place to ensure access to education for children with disabilities. The education stipend system had been extended to help cover the schooling costs of 7.8 million children. The school dropout rate had been reduced from 49 per cent in 2008 to 21 per cent in 2014, thanks, among

other things, to the introduction of a midday meal programme. The primary education teacher-student ratio had been cut from 1 to 56 to 1 to 48.

36. As to multilingual education for ethnic minority and indigenous children, textbooks in several minority languages had been developed, minority groups could introduce aspects of their own cultures into the national curriculum, teaching staff with the required language skills had been recruited. However, there was still a need for more trained staff. Primary level minority language textbooks would be distributed as of 2016, while work on minority language textbooks would continue in the period ahead. A nationwide ethnolinguistic survey was currently being carried out by the International Mother Language Institute.

37. Replying to Ms. Muhamad Shariff, said that mother tongue teaching would be rolled out in 2016.

38. **Ms. Afroze** (Bangladesh) said that quotas had been put in place for disadvantaged children and students at the college and university levels. The spread of online and print media and mobile phones and the improved economic situation in the country had made it easier for members of the public to report instances of sexual abuse of children to the authorities, who took immediate action in such cases. Judges had been appointed in every district to deal with offences involving women and children. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs had launched a multisectoral programme to provide legal assistance, psychological support, health care and counselling to child victims of sexual abuse. One-stop crisis centres had been set up in all districts as a part of the programme. A law on DNA testing had recently been adopted. The National Human Rights Commission had set up a committee on children's rights to look into issues such as corporal punishment, juvenile justice, child abuse, child marriage and trafficking in children. The committee could make recommendations to the competent authorities, submitted reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, kept a record of cases and could summon witnesses to testify before it.

39. **Ms. Begum** (Bangladesh) said that, as of August 2015, under the multisectoral programme, 23,613 women and children had received health care, legal assistance, social services and psychosocial counselling. In total, 5,320 persons had filed legal proceedings, 883 rulings had been issued and sanctions had been imposed in 107 cases. The one-stop crisis centres had assisted 2,300 children. The National Trauma Counselling Centre had been set up to support child victims. The National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory had analysed DNA in over 3,000 cases.

40. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that, under sections 82 and 83 of the Penal Code, the age of criminal responsibility was 7 years but was raised to 12 years in the case of children who lacked the capacity to understand the nature and consequences of their acts. Consequently, national legislation was in line with the relevant international standard. Any move to raise the age of criminal responsibility would result in an increase in the use of children to carry out criminal activities, as they would be seen to be immune from prosecution.

41. **Mr. Madi** said that, in the light of Mr. Chowdhury's explanation, he did not believe that State party's legislation was in line with the relevant international standard.

42. **Mr. Gastaud** asked whether, given the frequent flooding that affected the country, children in Bangladesh received training on life in a challenging physical environment, respect for the environment and sustainable development.

43. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** asked whether any studies had been carried out on child poverty in the State party. Information on the impact of international cooperation

assistance on the reduction of child poverty and respect for the rights of the child would be welcome.

44. **Ms. Afroze** (Bangladesh) said that per capita income in the State party had more than doubled over the past decade. Poverty had been reduced thanks to a number of measures, including the Social Safety Net programme and the Enabling Environment for Child Rights project. Bangladesh had also launched numerous disaster management initiatives.

45. **Mr. Kabir** (Bangladesh) said that the Enabling Environment for Child Rights project provided support for children aged 6-14 years and adolescents aged 14-18 years. Children were provided with a stipend on condition that they were not subjected to child marriage, corporal punishment or child labour. Adolescents received a stipend upon completion of life skills training. The project was currently supported by the United Nations Children's Fund.

46. **Mr. Das** (Bangladesh) said that child poverty reduction efforts had focused in particular on nutrition and education. A number of initiatives had been launched, including the Social Safety Net programme and the Vulnerable Group Development Programme for Ultra Poor, which covered families with a nursing child or a child under 2 years of age. Food aid and one-time cash transfers for income-generating activities were provided to families. Lactating mothers could claim an allowance and maternity benefits were made available to women in rural areas with children under the age of 2 years.

47. **Mr. Barman** (Bangladesh) said that the Ministry of Home Affairs was working for the repeal of the 1909 Whipping Act. Some cases of the killing and/or torture of children had occurred in Bangladesh, but the perpetrators had been dealt with promptly by the law enforcement agencies and courts. Road accidents were handled by the emergency services and careless drivers were prosecuted.

48. **Mr. Rodríguez Reyes** asked how many families had benefited from social programmes targeted to the poor and the vulnerable and what percentage of mothers received food aid. What concrete measures were being taken to immediately repeal the 1909 Whipping Act?

49. **The Chairperson**, speaking as an expert member of the Committee, asked for data on road accidents and emergency situations, and for information on the accessibility of related services and the provision of preventive education for children.

50. **Ms. Begum** (Bangladesh) said that the Jatiyo Protibondhi Unnayan Foundation had been set up by the Ministry of Social Welfare to work on development in the field of disability. A campaign to raise awareness of disability had been carried out. In connection with the ongoing national census, data on persons with disabilities had been collected.

51. **Mr. Tariq-ul-Islam** (Bangladesh) said that approximately 1 million mothers were receiving food assistance under the Vulnerable Group Development programme. Although there was currently no separate government body for dealing with children's affairs, officials from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs were working with colleagues from other ministries on plans to establish a future department devoted exclusively to children's matters. There were, however, no plans to divide the National Council on Women and Children Development into two bodies dealing separately with women's and children's affairs, since the high-level status of the Council, which was headed by the Prime Minister, ensured that it was able to deal effectively with both areas. The Seventh Five-Year Plan, covering the period from 2016 to 2020, would include a chapter detailing programmes and projects specifically targeting children. While it was indeed the case that there had been a decrease in the budget for social



safety net programmes in recent years, that trend had been reversed in the current fiscal year and the total allocation now stood at 350 billion taka, an increase of 50 billion compared to the previous year. The Government conducted campaigns to raise awareness of the Convention among interested parties, in particular through the nationwide network of children's academies. Sensitization measures had also been introduced with a view to underscoring the importance of providing separate lavatories for girls in all schools. The Government intended to increase the stipend for schoolchildren in the next fiscal year.

52. **Mr. Gastaud** asked whether the Government had any plans to assess children's knowledge of the Convention.

53. **Ms. Muhamad Shariff** said that, while the Committee noted that the 2013 Children Act had introduced measures to facilitate the provision of counselling and financial services to parents, it was nonetheless concerned about the limited number of probation officers and social workers available to provide those services. She would therefore like to know the reason for the shortage of personnel, the level of support provided to parents and whether there had been any evaluation of the impact of the measures taken. Referring to the inadequacy of the childcare facilities provided for the more than 2 million mothers working in the garment industry, she asked what support the Government had offered to the survivors of those who had died in the fire at the Tazreen Fashions factory in November 2012. She also wished to know what compensation had been offered by employers to survivors of others who had died in similar incidents in recent years and what steps the Government was taking to ensure that businesses provided safe workplace day-care facilities.

54. In view of reports of widespread neglect and abuse of children in orphanages, she asked whether any system was in place to monitor the quality of care in orphanages, whether any data were available on incidents of violence against children in such institutions, how such cases were handled by the authorities, whether the children concerned had access to an independent complaints mechanism and whether any process existed to review the placement of children. She also wished to know what kinds of services and facilities were made available to children with disabilities in those homes. More generally, she asked whether there was any national strategy to prevent abuse and neglect of children and, if so, whether any evaluation of its impact had been carried out.

55. The absence of child adoption laws in the State party had led to a situation where the buying and selling of children was rampant. She would therefore like to know what plans the Government had to legalize adoption.

56. Turning to issues relating to children with disabilities, she asked whether data collected by the Department of Social Services during the national disability identification survey conducted in 2012 had been used for planning and programming purposes. She also asked for information about the diagnosis of disabilities, the training of staff in that area, entitlement to free medical treatment for children with disabilities and government initiatives for their rehabilitation and social reintegration. She would also appreciate information on the status of a number of services for children with disabilities referred to in the State party's report, including the One-Stop Mobile Therapy Service, the Autism Resource Centre and the free special school for autistic children.

57. She asked what steps the State party had taken to address a number of health issues affecting children, including pneumonia mortality among children under the age of 5 years, anaemia and vitamin A deficiency among preschool-age children, and malnutrition. She also requested clarification of the high rate of death by drowning among children. She enquired why Caesarean section services had been discontinued

at the Gournadi Mother and Child Care Centre. In view of the recent decline in exclusive breast-feeding rates, the Government should take steps to improve mothers' knowledge of infant feeding and monitor key breast-feeding indicators on a regular basis. She asked what steps had been taken to publicize government sexual and reproductive health programmes among adolescents, whether adolescents were able to obtain free medical services on a confidential basis, and what efforts had been taken to establish and strengthen adolescent-friendly health services. Had the Government earmarked funds to continue HIV testing and support services once the initial funding had been spent? She enquired what kind of mental health services were available to adolescents, whether adolescents were provided with confidential medical assistance and whether schools referred cases of depression among pupils to hospitals.

58. Turning to drug and substance abuse, she asked what action the Government had taken to prevent the increasing use of young children in drug dealing and to provide separate drug rehabilitation services for children. She would also welcome information on steps taken by the State party to tackle smoking among young people.

59. The Committee was concerned that current social protection programmes aimed at reducing child poverty were not adequately addressing children's age-specific needs. She would therefore like to know what plans the State party had to improve the effectiveness of such programmes and to extend coverage to include children living in urban slums.

60. Lastly, she asked how the best interests of children were taken into account during criminal proceedings, whether any data were available on the number of children who were arrested with their mothers, the number of children living in prison with their parents, and what measures were taken to ensure that the children of incarcerated parents were not discriminated against in any way.

61. **Ms. Aldoseri** asked what the Government was doing to address the high dropout rate among secondary school pupils, in particular children from low-income families, refugee children and children living in urban slums. She wondered whether any action had been taken to make schools a more attractive option for pupils, for example by combating bullying in schools, enhancing the quality of school infrastructure and teacher training, or preventing teachers from administering corporal punishment. She requested information on the vocational programmes available for out-of-school children, especially those living in rural areas. She asked whether the Government intended to take any steps to increase the number of children with disabilities attending mainstream schools through, for instance, the provision of greater assistance for parents, improved physical access to premises and specialized training for teachers. She enquired whether the national school curriculum included human rights education and whether any assessment had been made of the impact of the National Education Policy following its introduction in 2010. Lastly, she asked whether adequate funding and human resources had been allocated to achieving the goals regarding recreational centres and activities for children set out in the 2011 Children's Policy.

62. **Mr. Madi** said that, while the Committee very much appreciated the State party's efforts to receive refugees from Myanmar, particularly Rohingya refugees, and to provide protection measures for them and it was concerned about reports that refugees' movement was restricted to within the two officially designated camps and that refugees, including children, found outside those camps were subject to detention. It was further concerned about reports concerning the lack of education opportunities for children in those camps and that children housed there were being removed from school in order to work. It was the Committee's understanding that, although under current national legislation all children born in the territory of the State party were entitled to be registered and to receive a Bangladesh birth certificate, children born in

Bangladesh to refugee parents were not being issued with officially recognized certificates and were thus to all intents and purposes stateless. He would therefore appreciate clarification of the situation of Rohingya refugees, including those living outside the official camps. He would also like to know whether the State party intended to become party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

63. The Committee was concerned that, despite the adoption in 2010 of the National Child Labour Elimination Policy, children continued to work in the informal sector, in particular in domestic work and hazardous forms of labour. He would therefore appreciate information on the steps being taken by the Government to enforce the relevant laws and policies, including the role of labour inspectors in that regard.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*