



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Summary record of the 695th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 7 March 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Fefoame

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35

(continued)

Initial report of Zambia (continued) (CRPD/C/ZMB/1; CRPD/C/ZMB/Q/1; CRPD/C/ZMB/RQ/1)

Articles 11–20

1. **A representative of Zambia**, responding to questions put at the previous meeting, said that the anti-torture bill had been finalized and was currently pending before the National Assembly. The National Human Rights Commission carried out independent assessments and monitored reported incidents of torture and ill-treatment in places of detention. The Commission prepared reports on the incidents and put forward recommendations to the relevant authorities on how the situation in question should be addressed. The anti-torture bill had been introduced at the Commission's recommendation, which had stressed the need for a separate law on torture and ill-treatment in detention facilities. His Government had taken urgent measures to stop forced hospitalization and treatment, including raising awareness about the rights of persons with disabilities among medical personnel and disseminating information relating to those rights among persons with disabilities. It had invited the relevant stakeholders to participate in those efforts in psychiatric centres. The measures were aimed at protecting the integrity of persons with disabilities and ensuring that their rights were protected by the authorities. Zambia had in place legislation that set out the circumstances in which abortions and sterilization could be performed and all such procedures required the consent of the person concerned.

2. **Mr. Kabue** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that the Committee would appreciate receiving data broken down by sex and age on acts of trafficking in persons, exploitation and ill-treatment of persons with disabilities, in the family, at school, at the workplace, in hospitals, particularly psychiatric hospitals, in places of detention and by traditional healers. It would also be interested in hearing about the action taken to respond to such acts.

3. **A representative of Zambia** said that his Government had established what were known as fast-track courts, which were aimed at ensuring that reported cases of abuse were promptly prosecuted. The authorities had worked in collaboration with the National Legal Aid Clinic for Women to develop simplified user-friendly forms for lodging complaints. Once a complaint was filed with one of the one-stop centres for gender-based violence, paralegals from the Clinic recorded the incidents, monitored the progress of cases before the fast-track courts and ensured that the victims were aware of their rights.

4. **Mr. Kabue** asked what progress had been made on the establishment of the proposed Mental Health Council under the Mental Health Act.

5. **A representative of Zambia** said that consultations on the establishment of the Mental Health Council were still under way. He trusted that his Government would be able to provide information on its establishment when the time was ripe.

6. **Mr. Kabue** said that it would be helpful to hear about the measures taken to ensure that all children with disabilities were registered at birth, including in remote and rural areas, and to assist persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities in obtaining the necessary national identity documents.

7. **A representative of Zambia** said that her Government had enhanced the Department of National Registration, Passport and Citizenship to ensure that all births were registered in hospitals. It was also endeavouring to introduce a biometric identification system. There were community organizations that followed up on persons who were unable to go to registration offices to ensure that they were duly registered.

8. **Sir Robert Martin** said that he would like to know what steps had been taken by the State party to ensure that persons with disabilities exercised their legal capacity and to repeal laws and systems that were based on substitute decision-making, in accordance with article

12 of the Convention and general comment No. 1 (2014), particularly persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities.

9. He also wished to know whether persons with disabilities who had been granted land under the country's resettlement scheme had the necessary financial resources to develop that land. He wondered whether the land offered easy access to basic needs, such as medical services and food.

10. **A representative of Zambia** said that his Government recognized that section 4 of the Mental Health Act was discriminatory. However, it intended to amend that section to bring it into line with international standards.

11. **A representative of Zambia** said that the provision of land to persons with disabilities was part of efforts to promote independent living. His Government was currently in the process of allocating land to persons with disabilities through the Office of the Vice-President. When land was demarcated and allocated to persons with disabilities, roads were constructed and bore holes drilled. Economic empowerment programmes for persons with disabilities were in place, particularly in agriculture. There was also a National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre to provide for the reskilling of persons with disabilities, with the support of the Constituency Development Fund. In addition, the National Trust Fund for Persons with Disabilities extended credit to persons with disabilities so that they could embark on various employment programmes.

12. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that the Committee had received reports that electroshock therapy continued to be used for persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities and that families facilitated the sterilization of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities without their consent. She wished to know what was currently being done by the State party to prevent and punish such practices. In addition, community support and benefits for living independently were said to be almost non-existent in Zambia, particularly in rural areas. She therefore wondered whether the State party was implementing any programme for deinstitutionalization and whether it was considering any community-based support to that end.

13. **A representative of Zambia** said that forced sterilization was a matter of great concern to the Government. Perpetrators of such acts were held to account and duly prosecuted. Furthermore, efforts were made to raise awareness among medical personnel and persons with disabilities about the issue.

14. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Government had a robust social protection system and programmes to promote independent living, including the flagship Social Cash Transfer programme. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security had a presence at the provincial and district levels. There were also committees at the community level that identified the need for support among households with persons with disabilities, including in rural areas, under the country's public welfare assistance scheme. Almost 11 per cent of persons with disabilities were benefiting from the Social Cash Transfer programme.

15. **A representative of Zambia** said that persons with disabilities living in rural areas had benefited from financial resources that the central authorities had distributed to local communities, including through the Constituency Development Fund and the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission.

16. **Ms. Dondovdorj** said that she would like to know how many temporary shelters the State party had for victims of domestic violence in general and how many of those shelters were fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

17. **A representative of Zambia** said that there were shelters in every province, which were staffed by trained professionals with a range of skills.

18. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that the Committee had received reports that intersex children continued to be subjected to unnecessary medical and surgical interventions without their consent. She wished to draw the delegation's attention to resolution 552 (LXXIV) of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, which called for the elimination of non-consensual genital normalization practices on intersex persons. She would also like to

know whether the State party had taken any steps to protect the rights of intersex persons against such practices and discrimination in general.

19. **A representative of Zambia** said that his delegation was unable to give a comprehensive response to the question just raised but would submit information to the Committee in writing.

20. **Ms. Boresli** said that she would like to know what steps the State party had taken to guarantee that persons with disabilities exercised their legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life. In particular, she would be interested in hearing about measures to guarantee the equal right of persons with disabilities, specifically persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, to own or inherit property, manage their financial affairs and participate in the public and private sectors, and to ensure that they were not arbitrarily deprived of their property.

21. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Government guaranteed the participation of persons with disabilities in public affairs. A classic example was John Chiti, a person with albinism, who had been appointed as Commissioner for the Zambia Police Service, which demonstrated the commitment of Zambia to ensuring that persons with disabilities were included in the governance of the country.

22. **A representative of Zambia** said that there were other notable examples of persons with disabilities who held important public positions in Zambia, including the head of the National Human Rights Commission. He himself was a deaf person who had been appointed Director General of the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities, which managed the affairs of persons with disabilities for the entire country.

23. **Mr. Kabue** said that he wondered why persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities were still institutionalized and what the Government was doing to remedy that situation. The Committee had information that the existing community-based inclusive development programmes in the country had been initiated by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and that the Government provided no funding for such initiatives. He would be interested in hearing about what the Government was doing to take over such programmes from NGOs and provide services for persons with disabilities that enabled them to live independently.

24. He would like to know how the State party planned to enable persons with disabilities to live on the land allocated to them under the resettlement scheme, which reportedly lacked access to basic services and facilities, including water, electricity, roads and schools. He would welcome a response from the State party on reports that the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities had not been successful in delivering mobility aids to a large number of persons with disabilities, especially in rural areas, thereby reducing their independence and personal mobility. He would be curious to hear how the State party planned to address the decision to only allow duty-free importation for motor vehicles that arrived fully adapted for use by persons with disabilities. Such a requirement was discriminatory, as many persons with disabilities needed a car for mobility purposes but could not drive themselves, such as blind persons.

25. **A representative of Zambia** said that the land allocated under the resettlement scheme was located within the Copperbelt Province. From the first group of persons with disabilities who had been offered land for farming in 2012, 13 now had farms. Roads were already present in that area. For the second group, new roads and schools were currently being constructed thanks to the Constituency Development Fund. The capacity of schools was being expanded to respond to the increased number of enrolments.

26. The requirement for imported motor vehicles to arrive fully adapted had been introduced because persons without disabilities had been taking advantage of the policy on duty-free importation by buying cars through persons with disabilities. The Government was now aware of the impracticality of such a requirement and was seeking an alternative solution.

27. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Government was in the final stages of developing community-based inclusive development guidelines, with a focus on the needs of

persons with disabilities. Its work was based on the findings and recommendations of the civil society organizations and NGOs that had piloted such guidelines.

28. **A representative of Zambia** said that, between 2017 and 2023, 8,302 assistive devices had been purchased for persons with disabilities, and additional assistive devices had been donated by local partners. Provincial coordinators were tasked with ensuring that assistive devices were distributed to persons with disabilities according to their needs.

29. **A representative of Zambia** said that a four-year memorandum of understanding had been signed with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for the provision of assistive devices.

30. **A representative of Zambia** said that, in 2023, the Government had reserved around 3 million kwacha to procure assistive devices for persons with disabilities. Those devices were expected to arrive for distribution in the next two months. To promote the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities, training on community-based interventions had been given to around 80 community and social workers in collaboration with the country's psychiatric hospital. A response to the question on electroshock therapy would be submitted in writing.

The meeting was suspended at 11 a.m. and resumed at 11.10 a.m.

Articles 21–30

31. **Mr. Kouassi** (Country Task Force) said that he wished to know what measures had been taken to recognize the national sign language as an official language in collaboration with the deaf community.

32. **A representative of Zambia** said that the State was in the process of recognizing the national sign language as an official language. The first step had been to standardize the national sign language by developing a sign language dictionary, which should be finalized in September 2024. The second step had been to review the national educational curriculum and decide which sign language would be taught in schools. Additional measures to promote the national sign language included the employment of sign language interpreters on all State television programmes and the organization of sign language training courses for nurses and midwives.

33. **Mr. Kouassi** said that the Committee would be interested to learn what measures had been taken, including budgetary measures, to ensure that public information was available to persons with disabilities in accessible formats.

34. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Zambia Library, Cultural and Skills Centre for the Blind and the Visually Impaired received grants from the State to transcribe all State documentation into Braille. The Cabinet had issued a memo instructing that all State documentation should be made available in accessible formats. Persons with disabilities could obtain access to public information by downloading the relevant documentation from ministry websites.

35. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Access to Information Act had come into force in 2023. It provided for the right of persons with disabilities to have access to public information.

36. **Mr. Kouassi** said that he would like to receive information on the measures taken by the State party, in collaboration with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, to implement a national strategy to guarantee the right of persons with disabilities to respect for privacy and the protection of their and their family's personal data.

37. **A representative of Zambia** said that several pieces of national legislation and the Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority protected the right of persons with disabilities to privacy and the protection of their personal data.

38. **A representative of Zambia** said that, under article 17 of the Constitution, all persons were protected from having their home and property searched, their possessions seized and information concerning their family or private affairs unnecessarily requested or reviewed.

39. **Mr. Kouassi** said that he would like to know what measures had been taken to inform persons with disabilities and their families about their right to privacy and the protection of their personal data.
40. **A representative of Zambia** said that several institutions worked with the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities to raise awareness of the right of persons with disabilities to privacy and the protection of their data.
41. **Mr. Kouassi** said that he would welcome an update on the status of the Marriage Act.
42. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Marriage Act of 2019 had entered into force, and the State party was taking steps to raise awareness of the right of persons with disabilities to form families and have a home, as provided for by the Act.
43. **Mr. Kouassi** said that he would be grateful for information on the measures taken by the State party to prevent children from being forcibly separated from their parents because of their own disability or the disability of one or both parents.
44. **A representative of Zambia** said that child safeguarding measures were in place to guarantee that children could remain in their family environment regardless of whether the parent or caregiver had a disability. The State was working with the Zambian police service to ensure that the provisions of the Children's Code Act were enforced in the best interest of the child, including with regard to negligence and maintenance.
45. **Mr. Kouassi** said that he would welcome further details on the measures in place to support children with disabilities and their parents and families, and to support parents with disabilities in carrying out their parental responsibilities.
46. **A representative of Zambia** said that several social protection programmes benefited households where a child's parent or caregiver had a disability, such as the farmer input support and women's and girls' empowerment and livelihoods programmes, the Social Cash Transfer programme and national health insurance schemes run by the National Health Insurance Management Authority.
47. **A representative of Zambia** said that children with disabilities were able to attend primary and secondary school, including boarding schools, free of charge thanks to the Constituency Development Fund.
48. **A representative of Zambia** said that a parenting handbook was being developed to respond to the lack of parenting guidance available to certain parts of the population.
49. **Mr. Kouassi** said that it would be useful to know of any programmes or policies in place to provide persons with disabilities, including those living in remote, rural and isolated areas, with age-appropriate information on family planning and sexual and reproductive health, delivered in accessible formats.
50. **A representative of Zambia** said that health centres at the district and subdistrict levels, including in rural areas, provided family planning and sexual and reproductive health information to women and young people with disabilities. Such centres were located throughout the country and were staffed by qualified personnel.
51. **Mr. Kouassi** said that he would like to know how the State party protected persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities from family members who wished to have them sterilized to prevent them from having children.
52. **A representative of Zambia** said that programmes were in place to raise awareness of the right of persons with disabilities to marry and have children, the positive impact of which could already be seen.
53. **Ms. Fitoussi** (Country Task Force) said that she would be interested to hear what mechanisms had been developed and what resources had been allocated to make quality education accessible to students with all types of disabilities, including psychosocial and intellectual disabilities.
54. **A representative of Zambia** said that the State offered free education to students with disabilities, had enhanced its recruitment of skilled staff in schools and had improved the accessibility of school facilities. Additionally, the National Education Policy of 1996 had

been reviewed to ensure that students with disabilities had access to education and received the support they required to succeed at school.

55. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she wished to clarify whether children with disabilities were able to attend mainstream schools rather than special schools.

56. **A representative of Zambia** said that the State was working to transform mainstream schools into inclusive schools while maintaining special schools. Students with severe disabilities who required the support of specialized teachers were taught in special schools, while students with mild disabilities remained in inclusive mainstream schools.

57. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would welcome further details on the steps taken to train teachers in mainstream schools, including teachers with disabilities, about inclusive education. She wished to know how many teachers with disabilities were employed in schools and how the State party monitored accessibility in all schools and in higher education institutions.

58. **A representative of Zambia** said that teachers in both mainstream and special schools were given disability training so that they were equipped to work with students with disabilities. Inclusion teams – made up of officers from the Ministry of Education’s Directorate of Standards who had received the necessary training – had been established at the district level to ensure that inclusive policies and guidelines were adhered to in mainstream schools.

59. **A representative of Zambia** said that many teachers who were specialized in working with students with disabilities had received training at the University of Zambia, Kwame Nkrumah University and the Zambia Institute of Special Education.

60. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would be curious to know whether the implementation of inclusive education was monitored in schools in rural and remote areas and, if so, what resources had been invested in the monitoring system.

61. **A representative of Zambia** said that the monitoring system trickled down from the national level to the subdistrict level. Inclusion teams were therefore present in all areas with schools, including in rural areas.

62. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that boarding schools for children with disabilities represented a form of institutionalized care and thus ran counter to the Convention. She would like to know what steps the State party was taking to integrate students at such schools into mainstream establishments. It would be helpful to learn what had been done to ensure that children with albinism were able to study in mainstream schools and would be fully accepted by their teachers and peers.

63. **A representative of Zambia** said that disability issues and inclusive education formed part of the teacher training curriculum. The Government worked with the Albinism Foundation of Zambia to raise awareness of the rights of students with albinism.

64. **A representative of Zambia** said that, given the low number of children with severe disabilities and the very few educators who specialized in teaching them, it made sense for those children to be brought together in boarding schools. Boarding schools also existed within the mainstream education system.

65. **A representative of Zambia** said that boarding schools were a positive environment for children with disabilities, particularly those who were deaf. Deaf children who attended such schools had far more opportunities to develop their sign language skills than they would have were they to live with family members who were not proficient in the language.

66. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that, while she understood that it made practical sense for children with similar types of disability to be taught together, the Convention established that children with disabilities had the right to attend the same schools as their peers without disabilities.

67. She wished to know what measures the State party had taken to ensure that persons with disabilities, particularly women and children, had full access to health services. She would be especially interested to hear about their access to sexual health and fertility services in both urban and remote areas.

68. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Government had taken steps to ensure the enjoyment of the right to health care by all citizens. Section 27 of the Persons with Disabilities Act provided for the right of all persons with disabilities to have access to free or affordable health-care services, including reproductive health services. The adolescent health strategy aimed to guarantee that young people with disabilities had equal access to sexual and reproductive health services.

69. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would appreciate information on the steps taken by the State party to provide persons with disabilities with mental health services and on the resources earmarked for the delivery of such services. She wondered whether medical personnel were trained in treating persons with disabilities and providing medical information in accessible formats.

70. **A representative of Zambia** said that one of the objectives of the Mental Health Act was to promote access to high-quality mental health services for persons with disabilities. Discussions on the composition of the new Mental Health Council had been held the previous week; it was expected that the Council would be established within one to two months so that it could begin work to improve the quality of mental health services in the country. The Ministry of Health had launched a sign language course in nursing schools in order to ensure that future nurses would be able to communicate with deaf persons.

71. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that it would be useful to learn whether persons with disabilities were treated in the same health-care facilities as individuals without disabilities.

72. **A representative of Zambia** said that persons with disabilities received medical care at facilities that served the general population. With regard to the resources allocated to health services, the Ministry of Health was one of the best funded ministries in the country.

73. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she wished to know whether medical personnel received training in easy-to-understand communication with patients with disabilities.

74. **A representative of Zambia** said that a national health insurance scheme had been set up to provide insurance to vulnerable individuals.

75. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Ministry of Health was sensitive to the wide-ranging needs of persons with disabilities. Patients with disabilities were able to receive information on their health in accessible and easy-to-understand formats.

76. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that the delegation might wish to describe any measures taken to make health-care facilities fully accessible for persons with disabilities and the equipment provided to those facilities to ensure that that was the case. She would like to know what had been done to implement the National Health Strategic Plan for 2017–2021.

77. **A representative of Zambia** said that some of the resources available under the Constituency Development Fund had been used to finance the construction, equipment and operationalization of community health centres. Funding had been provided, for instance, for the installation of computed tomography scanners in regional hospitals as part of efforts to reduce the distances that individuals had to travel in order to receive certain health services. A large number of health workers had recently been recruited to provide health services in rural communities that had previously been underserved.

78. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would be grateful for information on the funding allocated to rehabilitation programmes; she wondered whether persons with disabilities and their representative organizations participated in the development of such programmes.

79. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Ministry of Health offered rehabilitation services specifically for persons with disabilities and trained them in the use of assistive devices. The Government was in the process of finalizing guidelines on community-based inclusive development, which would provide for enhanced community-based rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. The Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities had its own budget line for the provision of rehabilitation services and assistive technologies.

80. **A representative of Zambia** said that a national strategic plan on rehabilitation for 2022–2026 had been developed by the Ministry of Health in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities.

81. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would like to know what steps had been taken to implement the statutory instrument on employment for persons with disabilities and combat employment-related discrimination against them. She wondered what reasonable accommodation was provided in the area of employment and what resources had been allocated to ensure that recruitment processes and professional training were accessible for persons with disabilities.

82. **A representative of Zambia** said that major strides had been made in promoting employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. A 10 per cent quota for the employment of persons with disabilities had been put in place in the public sector; efforts were currently under way to encourage private companies to implement similar quotas. The Government had also introduced a tax rebate for private companies that employed persons with disabilities.

83. **A representative of Zambia** said that the country had a number of statutes protecting the employment rights of persons with disabilities and addressing employment-related discrimination against them.

84. **A representative of Zambia** said that the implementation of the 10 per cent quota had led to a rise in the number of teachers with disabilities working in public schools from almost 200 in 2022 to more than 400 in 2023.

85. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that it would be useful to learn what had been done to promote the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and what mechanisms had been implemented and resources had been allocated to ensure enjoyment of the rights to clothing, housing and food by such persons in both urban and more remote areas.

86. **A representative of Zambia** said that a significant percentage of persons with disabilities received financial support under the Social Cash Transfer programme. The Government helped persons with disabilities to obtain access to funding through the Constituency Development Fund and had taken steps to ensure that such persons were represented on the committees responsible for selecting projects to receive resources from that Fund. The Government prioritized persons with disabilities when providing assistance in emergency situations.

87. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would welcome an explanation of the measures taken to ensure that all persons with disabilities, including women, were able to stand for election and hold seats in the National Assembly.

88. **A representative of Zambia** said that persons with disabilities participated in electoral processes on an equal footing with others. In 2021, for instance, a number of candidates with disabilities had successfully run for election. The Electoral Commission of Zambia had been allocated resources through the Constituency Development Fund in order to make polling stations across the country accessible for voters with disabilities. It provided those voters with information in accessible and easy-to-understand formats. The Government had recruited many persons with disabilities to occupy decision-making posts.

89. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she wished to know how much money the Government had invested in sport for persons with disabilities. How did that amount compare to the sum invested in sporting activities for individuals without disabilities?

90. **A representative of Zambia** said that persons with disabilities were represented on various government committees at the national, provincial and district levels. With regard to sporting activities, the Zambia Paralympic Committee had received a grant from the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Art in order to promote the participation of all persons with disabilities in such activities. Zambian athletes participated in the Special Olympics.

91. **Ms. Thongkuay**, noting reports that pregnant women with disabilities had faced discriminatory treatment in health-care facilities, said that she wished to know what steps were being taken to prevent discrimination against women with disabilities in all matters relating to family and marriage and to protect their right to marry and found a family on the basis of free and full consent. She would be particularly interested to hear about any measures aimed specifically at women and girls in rural areas, Indigenous women, older women, migrant and refugee women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. It

would also be useful to learn whether the Government compiled data on the situation of those groups of women and, if so, whether the Zambia Statistics Agency had developed a centralized database for the storage of such data.

92. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that she would like to know what was being done to address the fact that roughly one quarter of children with albinism had never attended school and those who had tended to go to schools established specifically for students with visual impairments. The Committee had been informed that there had been significant cuts to the social protection budget since 2015. What action was the State party taking to reverse that trend?

93. **A representative of Zambia** said that persons with disabilities, including pregnant women, were given priority treatment in health-care facilities in order to encourage them to visit such facilities when necessary. All schools in the country were inclusive; there were no schools exclusively for students with albinism. The Government continued to raise awareness of albinism and take steps to facilitate the integration of individuals with the condition into society.

94. **A representative of Zambia** said that investment in social protection services was increasing rather than decreasing. The number of beneficiaries of the Social Cash Transfer programme, for instance, had risen from approximately 648,000 in 2021 to well over 1 million in 2024. Around 200,000 of those beneficiaries were persons with disabilities. The Government contributed 65 per cent of the programme's resources, which was a sign of the importance it attached to social protection.

95. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Ministry of Health and the Zambia Statistics Agency all managed databases containing data on persons with disabilities. The database of the Ministry of Health also included information on access for women with disabilities to sexual and reproductive health services.

96. **A representative of Zambia** said that every effort was made to ensure that children with albinism had the same access as all other children to quality education in mainstream schools free of charge. Children with albinism were free to attend any school they wished. The Ministry of Education's district education standards officers conducted inspections to ensure that children with disabilities had access to primary and secondary education without discrimination. It was not true that 25 per cent of children with albinism did not attend school; the delegation would submit accurate statistics to the Committee in that regard. Zambian legislation made no reference to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons.

97. **A representative of Zambia** said that, when children with albinism were kept at home, it was purely because of the stigma felt by their parents or caregivers. The Government would enhance awareness-raising and sensitization programmes on the social inclusion of persons with albinism.

98. **The Chair** said that the Committee would be grateful to receive reliable statistics from the delegation, as the information it had received from other sources indicated that many children with albinism attended schools for blind students rather than mainstream schools. The State party must bear in mind that segregated residential institutions ran counter to the Convention.

99. **Mr. Morris**, noting that the Government was the largest employer of persons with disabilities, said that he would be interested to know what percentage of persons with disabilities was employed in the public sector, what specific incentives were in place to stimulate employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector, and what mechanisms were in place to track the employment of persons with disabilities in order to meet the targets of the 2030 Agenda. He wished to know when the necessary constitutional amendments, particularly to articles 70, 116 and 157, would be made to ensure that no person with disabilities was prevented from participating in politic life on account of their disability.

100. **Ms. Kim Mi Yeon** said that, since the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, poverty rates had increased around the world, pushing children out of school and into the workplace to support their families. She would welcome data on children who had acquired disabilities as a result of accidents in hazardous workplaces and information on the measures taken by the Government to assist such children. She would also be interested to hear about

any government efforts to prevent persons with disabilities, including children, from being subjected to slavery.

101. **A representative of Zambia** said that, in the public sector, many persons with disabilities pursued teaching careers. There were fewer opportunities and vacancies in other professions. Contrary to what the Committee might have heard, persons with disabilities were actively involved in politics. The delegation was not aware of anybody having been prevented from pursuing political office because of their disability. There were currently two persons with disabilities serving as members of the National Assembly.

102. **A representative of Zambia** said that tax incentives had been introduced to encourage the creation of job opportunities for persons with disabilities in the private sector. Businesses, such as hotels and chain stores, were thus employing more persons with disabilities in order to benefit from the tax savings on offer.

103. **A representative of Zambia** said that most children who worked did so in the informal mining industry. In the event that they acquired a disability while at work, the Ministry of Health provided them with rehabilitation services free of charge.

104. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Workers' Compensation Fund Control Board provided compensation to persons who acquired disabilities at work.

105. **A representative of Zambia** said that certain jobs in the public sector were specifically reserved for persons with disabilities. For example, the job of telephone operator in a government ministry was ideally suited to persons with disabilities. In order to promote the recruitment of persons with disabilities in the public service, eligibility requirements – such as having attained a particular grade in mathematics or English – were sometimes relaxed for candidates with disabilities.

106. **Ms. Boresli** said that she would welcome information on specific measures taken to support an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities, including financial support, training and social protection programmes, as well as efforts to raise awareness among persons with disabilities of their rights and the availability of such support.

107. **Mr. Makni** (Country Task Force) said that he would be interested to know the percentage of persons with disabilities who went on to study at university level. It would be useful to hear whether adaptations were made to enable persons with disabilities to take up particular jobs, and whether there was a mechanism and funding in place for such adaptations.

108. **A representative of Zambia** said that various activities were conducted to raise public awareness of the eligibility requirements and deadlines for enrolment in social protection programmes, including radio campaigns, community meetings and neighbourhood outreach by community welfare assistance committees. The Government ran a student loan scheme for those wishing to study at university level, and there was also a quota system for the enrolment of students with disabilities in any of the country's eight public universities.

109. **A representative of Zambia** said that the Constituency Development Fund's financial literacy training had had a positive impact on the lives of persons with disabilities, who faced serious challenges in that area. Organizations of persons with disabilities had been invited to submit project proposals to the Fund.

110. **Mr. Kabue** said that he would like to know how the mechanism for reporting violations of rights was monitored. For instance, he would be interested to know what follow-up had been given to the case involving the rape of a person with an intellectual disability in Zenga, which had been reported to the one-stop centre. In the light of reports that many persons with disabilities, particularly persons with intellectual disabilities, had never been registered in the civil registry, he wished to know what the Government was doing to ensure that free registration of all persons was actually taking place in practice. Concerning political participation, he would be interested to know what measures the Government had taken to implement the ruling in the Sarah Brotherton case, in which the Electoral Commission had been ordered to make all electoral processes accessible. The Committee understood that there had still been many problems related to accessibility in the most recent elections, including in relation to the Braille ballot jackets. Lastly, he would be interested to hear what the Government was doing to fight against stigma and the ignorance of parents of

children with albinism who did not send their children to school and how it was ensuring the protection of those children.

111. **A representative of Zambia** said that it was true that, in the past, families had been reluctant to register their children with disabilities and to acquire national identity cards for them because they had not seen the utility of doing so. However, awareness of the importance and benefits of registration was growing. Many persons with disabilities, especially older persons, had been unable to enrol in the Social Cash Transfer programme because they had never acquired a national identity card, which was a prerequisite for enrolment. However, as people became aware of that requirement, many were coming forward to have their children and relatives registered.

112. In terms of the reporting of violations by persons with disabilities, it should be noted that disability issues had been mainstreamed in police training. Specialized services and support were available for victims of abuse, particularly through the one-stop centres, which were staffed by medical personnel, social workers and police officers. Through the case management system, community volunteers who identified victims of abuse could refer the cases to law enforcement agencies for investigation.

113. **A representative of Zambia** said that the one-stop centres kept files for all reported cases of abuse or violations of rights and, if necessary, referred them for prosecution. The centres worked with the National Legal Aid Clinic for Women when the rights of women were involved. Many cases had been prosecuted and the perpetrators held accountable.

114. **A representative of Zambia** said that the delegation would appreciate if the Committee could share with it the details of unregistered persons with disabilities that had been brought to its attention. The Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities had the mandate to ensure that all persons with disabilities were registered. Many reforms had been made to the electoral process in response to the ruling in the Sarah Brotherton case. The 2021 elections had generally been a success in terms of the participation of persons with disabilities. The Electoral Commission had a focal point for disability issues. The Braille ballot jackets had been designed in full consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, and other user-friendly materials had also been produced for blind or deaf voters and those with mental disabilities.

115. **A representative of Zambia** said that the delegation would provide information in writing on any questions which it had not had the time to answer. There had been many developments since the submission of the State party report in 2017, some of which had necessitated changes in strategy that had in turn led to delays in addressing some of the concerns of persons with disabilities.

116. **Mr. Kabue** said that, although the delegation had indicated that the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities was very well funded, the Committee had been informed that provincial officers did not even have the necessary resources to write their reports. The Committee therefore encouraged the State party to look into the real situation on the ground. It also encouraged the State party to ensure greater inter-ministerial coordination so that the Ministry of Social Development and the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities were not left alone to deal with disability matters.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.