



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Thirtieth session

Summary record of the 707th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 15 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 to third reports of Nicaragua, considered in the absence of a delegation
(CRPD/C/NIC/1; CRPD/C/NIC/2; CRPD/C/NIC/3; CRPD/C/NIC/Q/1-3)*

1. **The Chair** said that she found it regrettable that Nicaragua had not sent a delegation to present its initial to third reports and engage in a constructive dialogue with the Committee, despite the repeated steps taken by the Committee and the secretariat to cooperate with the State party. In October 2021, the secretariat had sent a note verbale to the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, informing it that the Committee would adopt a list of issues in relation to the reports at the fifteenth session of the Committee's pre-sessional working group in March and April 2022. That list of issues had been shared with the Permanent Mission in April 2022 and had been followed by repeated requests for responses. Between 7 June 2023 and 11 March 2024, the secretariat had sent a number of invitations and reminders to the State party in preparation for the constructive dialogue. To date, the secretariat had not received any response to its official correspondence.

2. The Committee wished to remind Nicaragua that the ratification of the Convention entailed a number of international obligations and engagements with respect to the Committee. The doors for cooperation were open, and the Committee looked forward to receiving the State party for a dialogue at a forthcoming session. She invited Committee members to proceed with their questions relating to the articles of the Convention.

Articles 1–10

3. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** (Country Rapporteur) said that the State party had ratified a number of human rights treaties but appeared to be renegeing on its obligations under those instruments. In 2018, for instance, protests sparked by the Government's proposed social security reforms had been repressed by law enforcement officials, resulting in deaths and injuries. Some of the violence committed during that period had been attributed to paramilitary groups. The Committee, for its part, had observed many steps backwards in terms of the rights of persons with disabilities in the State party. Accordingly, the Committee wished once again to invite the State party to comply with the human rights treaties that it had ratified, accept the Committee's invitations to attend constructive dialogues and implement the Committee's recommendations.

4. She would like to know whether the State party had taken steps to explicitly recognize discrimination on grounds of disability in the Constitution and other laws. It would be useful to learn how often the Persons with Disabilities' Office held meetings and to hear concrete examples of laws that it had helped to amend. She wondered whether the State party had a specific mechanism for the receipt, processing and follow-up of complaints of discrimination on grounds of disability.

5. While the Committee recognized the State party's achievements in reducing gender inequality, it would appreciate information on whether the Comprehensive Act on Combating Violence against Women contained cross-cutting provisions on discrimination and violence against women and girls with disabilities, particularly those with multiple psychosocial and intellectual disabilities or belonging to Indigenous communities. She would welcome clarification of whether the campaign for the prevention of adolescent pregnancies included a disability perspective or also targeted girls with disabilities. Did the State party have data, disaggregated by disability status, on the number of adolescent pregnancies?

6. It would be helpful to learn what was being done to reduce poverty among children with disabilities. In addition, she would like to know whether the Code on Children and Adolescents made explicit mention of children with disabilities. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) had reported that, since August 2022, more than 18 children with a mother or father who had been deprived of liberty had had no contact with that parent. She wished to know how many of those children had disabilities and what measures were being taken to enable them to visit their parent.

7. The Committee would be interested to hear whether the State party intended to step up its efforts to shift away from a medical model of disability and towards the human rights-based model provided for under the Convention. She wondered what measures were being taken to enhance the implementation of the Nicaraguan Mandatory Technical Regulation on Accessibility.

8. OHCHR had documented at least 27 cases of enforced disappearance linked to the 2018 crisis; she wished to know what had happened to those individuals and how many of them were persons with disabilities. It would be helpful to learn how many of the 526 victims of femicide documented by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women from 2012 to 2019 were women or girls with disabilities and what was being done to prevent that serious crime.

9. **Ms. Dondovdorj** said that she would like to know whether the State party had established a mechanism to conduct periodic reviews of its laws to ensure that they were compliant with the Convention and, if so, to what extent organizations of persons with disabilities were involved in that process. It would be useful to learn whether steps had been taken to guarantee that gender-related policies and measures were disability inclusive and followed a human rights-based approach and whether women with disabilities participated in the development of those policies and measures.

10. **Sir Robert Martin** said that the Committee would be interested to hear what had been done to ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities were consulted on the design and implementation of laws and policies that affected them. He wished to know whether there were any organizations led by and for persons with intellectual disabilities. An explanation of the measures taken to address the stigmatization, prejudice, bullying and hate crimes faced by persons with disabilities would be welcome. It had been reported that persons with disabilities were sometimes shunned owing to the belief that disability was associated with evil spirits and family curses. Accordingly, he would like to know what measures had been taken to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities under the Convention and provide training on those rights to police officers and actors in the media, justice, education and health sectors.

11. **Ms. Fernández de Torrijos** said that the State party's failure to send a delegation to the dialogue demonstrated the little interest it had in matters relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the Convention. There had been an increase in domestic violence in the State party, and the institutions responsible for tackling that issue had failed to establish a data-collection system that would enable them to understand and monitor the situation of women with disabilities. The Committee would thus be grateful for information on the action that would be taken to address that issue and ensure that women with disabilities were included in domestic violence programmes. She wished to know how persons with disabilities and their needs were identified in the risk maps for each territory and what steps the State party was taking to promote the participation of such persons in risk management efforts. It would be useful to hear about the mechanisms that were in place to support persons with disabilities who were completely dependent on their caregiver when they were hospitalized.

12. **Ms. Aldana Salguero** (Country Rapporteur) said that she was deeply disappointed that the State party had failed to send a delegation to the dialogue. She would like to know whether the State party intended to abolish Acts No. 1040 and No. 1115, which clearly restricted freedom of association, and take steps to promote that freedom and the participation of persons with disabilities in associations.

13. **Ms. Boresli** said that the fact that Nicaragua had failed to meet its responsibilities under the Convention was an affront to persons with disabilities in the State party. The Committee would appreciate information on the measures adopted to ensure that strategies, policies and plans for the management of humanitarian emergencies took account of the needs of persons with disabilities and were circulated to them in accessible formats. She wondered whether the State party had taken steps to provide persons with disabilities with assistive devices and accessible mobile telephones to be used in emergencies, to train emergency workers in assisting such persons and to ensure that shelters, communication channels and emergency health-care and social support services were accessible to them.

14. **The Chair** said that she would welcome information on any measures taken to ensure that laws and policies took gender and disability perspectives into account. It would be helpful to know what had been done to guarantee respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities in mainstream education programmes. She wished to learn whether the State party had strategies in place to improve the accessibility of community facilities and services for persons with disabilities and, if so, what budget had been earmarked for the implementation of those strategies.

15. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that she would be grateful for concrete examples of the policies implemented to empower women with disabilities and wished to know whether the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry for the Family worked together to address matters relating to persons with disabilities and through what programmes they did so.

16. The Committee would welcome information on the measures being taken to prevent domestic violence against children with disabilities. She wondered whether the guide to treatment and support for children had been adopted and whether it applied to children with disabilities.

17. It would be helpful to know what was being done to guarantee that communication channels were fully accessible for deaf persons.

Articles 11–20

18. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that the Committee had received information that acts of repression had been committed against environmental activists, including women with disabilities. Accordingly, she wished to know how many individuals had been victims of such repression, whether they had received compensation and whether penalties had been handed down to the perpetrators.

19. She would be interested to hear whether the State party intended to amend the Family Code, articles 22 to 31 of which restricted the legal capacity of certain persons with mental or physical disabilities.

20. She wished to know what was being done to prevent violence against women with disabilities, particularly deaf women and women with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities who lived in the northern Caribbean coastal region. It would be helpful to learn how many women with disabilities had been interrogated for political reasons. In view of reports from OHCHR that individuals deemed to be opponents of the Government continued to be arrested without a warrant and denied the right to a fair trial, she would like to know what steps the State party was taking to address that serious issue.

21. The Committee would appreciate information on whether efforts were being made to amend Act No. 870, which currently provided for involuntary committal on psychiatric grounds. She wondered how many persons with disabilities had been deprived of liberty in prisons or psychiatric hospitals and what was being done to ensure that those in prisons had access to their assistive devices.

22. OHCHR had reported that a high proportion of women who had been deprived of liberty in four detention facilities in the State party had been subjected to physical and psychological torture and ill-treatment. She wished to know how many of those women had disabilities and, more generally, how many persons with disabilities had been victims of such acts. It would be helpful to learn whether persons with disabilities who had been deprived of liberty were able to receive visits from family members and national and international human rights organizations.

23. She would welcome an update on the status of the bill submitted to the parliament in 2022 by organizations of persons with disabilities, the objective of which was to prevent violence against such persons in the home.

24. **Ms. Aldana Salguero** said that, in the light of the fact that Nicaragua was prone to disastrous tropical storms that had left many people dead, injured or displaced, she would like to know what measures or protocols, including emergency protocols, were in place to protect persons with disabilities.

25. **Ms. Fernández de Torrijos** said that it would be of interest to hear what steps the State party was taking to address violations of the rights of persons with disabilities under article 12 of the Convention on the right to equal recognition before the law, including their enjoyment of legal capacity on an equal basis with others and their right to own or inherit property, to control their own financial affairs and to have equal access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit.

26. **Sir Robert Martin** said that the Committee would welcome information on the steps taken to replace guardianship and other systems based on substitute decision-making with supported decision-making mechanisms. He wondered whether any training was available on supported decision-making for persons with disabilities, their families and professionals, especially those working in the judicial system.

27. It would be useful to know what measures had been taken to review and repeal all laws that deprived persons with disabilities of their legal capacity, and to guarantee their right to live independently and to be included in the community. He would be grateful for information on how the State party intended to ensure the deinstitutionalization of persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities and on the resources available to that end. How were persons with disabilities supported to make decisions on where, how and with whom they wanted to live?

28. **Ms. Jacobs** said that she wished to learn what measures had been taken to promote appropriate training for individuals working in the administration of justice, including police and prison staff and members of the judiciary, on working with persons with disabilities and procedural accommodations, in particular for persons who required sign language interpretation and persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities.

29. **Ms. Kayess** said that she would be curious to hear what measures had been taken to ensure that Indigenous persons with disabilities who were victims of attacks were provided with life-sustaining support, essential services and disability support. She wondered whether any changes had been made to laws and policies to recognize and protect internally displaced or stateless persons with disabilities, and whether any initiatives had been implemented to recognize the individual and collective rights of Indigenous Peoples, including Indigenous persons with disabilities.

30. **Ms. Kim Mi Yeon** said that she wished to know what measures had been taken by the Government to guarantee the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and freely, including the provision of legal protection from deprivation of liberty and involuntary hospitalization for adults and children with psychosocial disabilities.

31. **Ms. Gamio Ríos**, referring to OHCHR reports concerning the 316 Nicaraguans perceived to oppose the Government who had been deprived of their nationality, some of whom had also been denied copies of civil registration documents and university transcripts, said that she would be interested to know whether persons with disabilities had also been affected by such measures.

32. She wondered whether the State party had a specific policy on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community and the provision of the necessary forms of support to allow them to live independently, such as accessible housing. It would be useful to know how many children with disabilities were living in institutions and whether evaluation and monitoring programmes were in place to prevent violations of their human rights.

33. **The Chair** said that the Committee would like to obtain updated information on the measures taken to ensure that concrete safeguards and relevant laws were in place to protect children with disabilities from violence and abuse. She would be grateful for further details on the coverage of programmes intended to increase the proximity of services that issued identity documents to persons with disabilities, particularly in rural areas.

The meeting was suspended at 10.55 a.m. and resumed at 11.15 a.m.

Articles 21–33

34. **Ms. Aldana Salguero** said that she would be interested to know how many persons with disabilities had access to the mobility supports produced in the country, what percentage

of beneficiaries were women and girls, what types of support had been provided and for which types of disability. She wished to learn what measures had been taken to guarantee basic functional rehabilitation, especially for persons with sensory disabilities, and how the State ensured that hard-of-hearing persons had access to information and communication. She would appreciate further details on the ways in which public institutions disseminated information about their work in formats accessible to all persons with disabilities and the number of sign language interpreters employed in public institutions. She wondered what action had been taken to enable persons with disabilities to obtain access to public and personal information themselves, without requiring the assistance of a third party. She would also like to know how it was ensured that persons with disabilities and their representative organizations could exercise their right to freedom of expression and opinion without restriction or fear of violence.

35. She also wished to hear how the State party promoted and protected the right of persons with disabilities to start a family, including persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. The Committee would welcome a response regarding reports that women and girls with disabilities, especially in remote areas, had been subjected to forced sterilization. She would like to know what steps had been taken to prevent forced sterilization and to guarantee that the free and informed consent of persons with disabilities was sought in relation to any treatment or procedure. It would also be useful to hear what measures the State had implemented to provide free and informed access to contraceptive methods to persons with disabilities, including those living in remote areas, and how cases in which a parent gave consent for sterilization on behalf of a child with a disability were reflected in government statistics.

36. She wished to know what actions the State party had taken to remove physical barriers in educational institutions so as to improve accessibility for children with disabilities; what support and resources were available in schools to ensure that education was accessible to persons with visual and hearing impairments; what action had been taken to ensure that students with disabilities were not limited to schools in urban areas; and what measures had been implemented to enhance the training of counsellors and teaching staff in the area of disability and inclusive education. She wondered how many children with disabilities were in school and what initiatives had been implemented to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure that students with disabilities had access to education and could remain in and succeed at school. Was there an academic scholarship programme to allow students with disabilities to have access to continuing education and attend university, and to have sign language interpreters in educational centres?

37. She would be curious to know what steps had been taken to address the situation whereby persons with psychosocial and other disabilities were offered medication that kept them numb, thus preventing them from living a “normal” daily life. She wondered how the State party guaranteed the sanitary conditions of the Pajarito Azul children’s centre and the National Psychosocial Hospital; how many women, men and children with disabilities were still institutionalized in those centres; and whether those individuals were provided with the necessary support to allow them to return to the community. It would be useful to learn what measures had been implemented to ensure that persons with less common disabilities had access to specialized health services.

38. She wished to know when the Carlos Fonseca Rehabilitation Centre for the Blind would become operational and what steps had been taken to equip it with the human and financial resources required to support persons with visual impairments across the country, including in remote areas. She would also like to know the number of prosthetics and orthotics that had been produced at the National Prosthetic and Orthotic Centre, the number given to persons with physical disabilities or visual or hearing impairments, and the process for obtaining them.

39. The Committee would welcome data, disaggregated by sex, on the number of persons with disabilities who had received training at the National Technological Institute and from the Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy. She wondered how many persons with disabilities worked in public institutions and what measures had been implemented to promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors.

40. She wished to know what steps would be taken to ensure that persons with disabilities who worked in the informal economy had access to social protection, since they did not make social security contributions, and the measures planned to take up the initiative presented by 43,000 citizens to establish in law a monthly support payment, in line with the current minimum wage, for persons with disabilities in critical situations.

41. With regard to political and public life, the Committee would be interested to know how the State supported the participation and took into account the opinions of persons with disabilities, both at the national and local levels, and what steps had been taken to ensure that persons with disabilities not only had the right to vote, but also to run and be elected for public office.

42. She wished to obtain information on the measures implemented by the Sports Federation of the Nicaraguan Paralympic Committee to promote sport for persons with disabilities, and a breakdown of how the 3 per cent of the overall State budget for sport allocated for disability sports under the General Sports Act was used.

43. She would welcome information on the actions taken to improve the statistical data on the care provided to persons with disabilities in institutions. She wished to know how statistical information on persons with disabilities was collected and monitored and who was responsible for compiling that information. She wondered whether the Government would consider handing over responsibility for compiling statistical data on persons with disabilities to an institution other than the Ministry of Health, to avoid a medical approach to disability, which was contrary to the Convention.

44. She would like to know what was being done to heighten awareness and raise the profile of persons with disabilities in international cooperation agreements. She would also like to know which entity was specifically responsible for monitoring compliance with the Convention and whether there was an independent mechanism to ensure that such monitoring was impartial.

45. **Ms. Kayess** asked how the State party protected freedom of expression and opinion for children and adults with disabilities when voicing dissenting views on official positions or religious views, how it protected children and adults with disabilities from victimization and how it provided for accountability and redress to children and adults with disabilities who had been subjected to arbitrary detention and torture or ill-treatment.

46. **Mr. Morris** said that he, too, was concerned about the absence of a delegation from the State party. He welcomed the information in the State party's third report that 32,070 teachers had been trained in inclusive education and would be interested in learning what percentage of the country's teachers that figure represented. He wished to know whether students were provided with the requisite assistive technologies in the mainstream education system, how many students with disabilities were in tertiary institutions and what support was provided to them, including reasonable accommodation. Referring to the impressive number of public servants with disabilities cited in paragraph 178 of the third report, he wished to know what reasonable accommodation was provided for those persons as they executed their various roles in the public sector. Lastly, he wondered whether the State party was planning to take action on the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled.

47. **Ms. Jacobs** said that, as of 2023, a total of 27 universities were reported to have been closed in Nicaragua, with their legal status cancelled and their assets confiscated. She wondered what impact the university closures had had on students with disabilities. She would be interested to hear how barriers to education in the universities and post-secondary institutions that remained open were documented. It would be useful to learn how students made requests for reasonable accommodation, how they registered complaints and what mechanisms were in place to address concerns over disability discrimination. She wished to join other colleagues in expressing her disappointment over the failure to meet with the delegation from Nicaragua.

48. **Ms. Fitoussi** said that she would welcome information on steps being taken to provide information on financial assistance and relevant rights and psychosocial support to families of persons with disabilities. It would be helpful to hear about the ways in which the State

helped parents with disabilities to raise their children at home, particularly low-income families. It would also be useful to have an account of the programmes in schools designed to promote the education of students with disabilities, especially those facing poverty and violence. She would appreciate information on access to medical information and equipment in health centres and the number of women's health centres that were accessible to women with disabilities.

49. **Mr. Makni** said that he wished to know what steps had been taken to provide persons with disabilities with assistive technology. He would also like to know what legislative and administrative measures were in place to ensure full respect for the right to personal mobility of persons with disabilities. He would welcome information on training in mobility skills for persons with disabilities and for specialists working with and for persons with disabilities. He wondered what penalties were imposed on persons and institutions that violated the confidentiality of information about persons with disabilities. It would be helpful to have a list of relevant judgments, if any, in cases involving such violations. Information on the measures to support and ensure the empowerment of persons living with autism would be appreciated.

50. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she, too, regretted the delegation's absence. The State party had rejected the establishment of the Group of Human Right Experts on Nicaragua, claiming that it had been created for political reasons, and had voted against a series of resolutions on human rights adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session in 2023, including on the implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto in the context of situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. She would appreciate knowing the reasons why it had rejected the establishment of the Group and voted against the resolutions. She would also like to know what measures had been taken to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters, and what mechanisms were in place to prevent the gender discrimination, torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, domestic violence and abuse faced by women with disabilities on a daily basis, including Indigenous women, women of African descent, and migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women. She also wondered what measures were in place to ensure that persons with disabilities had access to justice and were able to participate directly and indirectly in all legal proceedings, including through the provision of appropriate accommodations.

51. **Ms. Boresli** said that she would appreciate hearing about the legislative and other measures being taken to ensure that persons with disabilities could exercise their right to freedom of expression and opinion on an equal basis with others through all forms of communication of their choice. She would also like to know what was being done to ensure that private entities that offered services to the general public, including through the Internet, provided information and services in accessible formats for persons with disabilities and complied with the latest standards of the Web Accessibility Initiative. She wished to know what steps had been taken to recognize Nicaraguan Sign Language as an official language, to ensure that qualified sign language interpreters were available, including by means of budget allocations, and to promote the use of sign language in the workplace and other settings.

52. **The Chair** said that she would welcome information on the measures to promote alternative care in family settings rather than institutional settings for children with disabilities who had no parental care. She wondered what efforts had been made to ensure the availability of accessible information about family planning services and reproductive health and the rights of persons with disabilities. She wished to know what efforts had been made to increase budgetary allocations to ensure that women with disabilities, in particular Indigenous and rural women and girls, had access to affordable health-care services and medicines, as had been recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its most recent concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/NIC/CO/7-10](#)). She would appreciate details on the extent of public financial support for organizations of persons with disabilities to promote entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities and on their initiatives to ensure that women with disabilities had full and equal access to existing self-employment and microfinance programmes. Lastly, it would be helpful to have

information on the number of women in the parliament and specific measures to increase the participation of women with disabilities in other decision-making bodies, including at the local level.

53. **Ms. Kim Mi Yeon** said that she wished to know what the State party had done to increase social and medical opportunities for the habilitation and rehabilitation of children with disabilities, especially girls, at the local level. She would appreciate an account of its policy on the cost effectiveness of health-care solutions for Nicaraguans with disabilities.

54. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that she would like the State party to provide information on the more than 7,000 cases of attacks against human rights defenders, including women with disabilities. The Committee was concerned that the Civil Code, particularly article 111 (2), continued to contain pejorative descriptions of persons with psychosocial disabilities and deprived them of their right to marry. Were there any plans to amend that article of the Code? She wondered whether a national plan on inclusive education was envisaged. The Committee was also deeply concerned about the inadequate coverage of health services and medicines, which affected women in particular. She would appreciate hearing about any plans of action to generate more employment in the public and private sectors and in rural areas for persons with disabilities. She wished to know the number of beneficiaries of the measures to promote the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities that had been outlined in the State party reports. She also would like to know how many persons with disabilities held public office. She would be interested in hearing about the efforts made to keep accurate statistics on persons with disabilities. Information on the State party's use of international cooperation to promote the rights of persons with disabilities would also be useful, as there were reports that such information was used only for medical programmes. Lastly, she wished to know whether the State party intended to set up an independent mechanism to monitor the Convention.

55. **Ms. Fernández de Torrijos** said that the National Institute of Technology and the Ministry of Household, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economic Affairs had worked to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in recent years. However, access to training centres had been limited owing to architectural barriers, long distances, inaccessible transport and teachers who claimed that they were not prepared. She would like to know what legislative measures had been taken to overcome those obstacles and provide adequate services. She would also be interested to hear what was being done to involve persons with disabilities in electoral processes and ensure that they were able to gain access to elective office through their participation in political parties.

56. **Mr. Makni** said that the national human rights institution of Nicaragua had been accredited with category B status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. He wished to know whether the State party intended to give it greater independence and grant persons with disabilities the right to sit on the institution, in accordance with the Paris Principles.

57. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that only 10 per cent of persons with disabilities, classified by the State as persons with "severe" disabilities, received regular assistance, including health care, housing improvements, food and accessible facilities. She wondered how the State party intended to address that situation. She also wished to know how many persons with disabilities were living in extreme poverty, especially in rural and remote areas and among Indigenous communities.

The meeting was suspended at 12.05 p.m. and resumed at 12.30 p.m.

58. **Ms. Aldana Salguero** said that the absence of a delegation and lack of cooperation from the State party would make the Committee's task of assessing the status of implementation of the Convention more difficult. The State party's silence bore witness to its indifference to the rights of persons with disabilities in Nicaragua. The Committee urged the State party to submit its written replies to all the questions posed at the current meeting in a timely manner. While the Committee recognized successes such as the National Human Development Plan, it encouraged the State party to go beyond expressions of good intention and take action in favour of persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls with disabilities. The Committee recommended that the State party should increase the financial and human resources of the Office of the Civil Branch of Government for Organizations of

Persons with Disabilities to facilitate cooperation and communication with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in an environment free from repression. It urged the Government to take up again the memorandum with the Nicaraguan Federation of Associations of Persons with Disabilities and consider abolishing discriminatory laws still in force, such as Acts Nos. 1040 and 1115. It also called for the criteria used for identity cards for persons with disabilities, which to date were subject to support for the regime, to be removed, as such criteria left behind thousands of persons with disabilities who did not have access to measures of public protection. Although the State party reports referred to various measures to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities, such discrimination continued to prevail in the country. There was a need to create consultation mechanisms with all the organizations of persons with disabilities in the country for the formulation of policies, laws and measures to ensure that persons with disabilities fully enjoyed their rights and were able to raise their voices in a free and safe environment.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.