



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child Seventy-fifth session

Summary record of the 2210th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 26 May 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Winter

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

Consideration of reports of States parties *(continued)*

Fifth periodic report of Mongolia (CRC/C/MNG/5; CRC/C/MNG/Q/5 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Mongolia took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Ms. Mungunchimeg** (Mongolia) said that Mongolia had made considerable progress recently towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Maternal and infant mortality had fallen steadily, and enrolment in basic education had risen considerably. Improving the quality of education in Mongolia was a high priority. More than a third of the country's population was 19 years old or less.
3. The Government Action Plan 2016-2020 contained specific targets aimed at protecting and promoting children's rights. In addition, the Government had taken measures to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto, including by acting on the recommendations made by the Committee in its concluding observations on the country's combined third and fourth periodic reports (CRC/C/MNG/CO/3-4) and, more generally, by bringing the country's laws and regulations into line with the international instruments to which it was a party.
4. Reforms had made it possible to address such issues affecting children as neglect, abuse, exploitation and violence. The reforms had included the adoption of laws on the rights of the child, on the rights of persons with disabilities and on childcare. Amendments to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and other related bodies of law were set to enter into force in July 2017. The amended Law on Domestic Violence provided a legal basis for a number of measures to combat domestic violence, including a mandatory reporting requirement. The newly amended Criminal Code contained a chapter that had been added to ensure that a child's particular circumstances were taken into consideration when he or she was subject to a criminal penalty. It also contained a new chapter specifically covering crimes against children, including crimes under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Efforts to amend other relevant laws were under way.
5. As a result of an economic slowdown, the Government was required to juggle competing priorities. It was nonetheless continuing to make efforts to develop child- and family-friendly social welfare policies. A bill on providing monetary allowances to mothers and single parents was currently before the parliament, for instance. The quality of the social services available to families and children had improved considerably.
6. An immunization programme and other measures, include a focus on child nutrition, had enabled Mongolia to reduce the mortality of children less than 5 years of age by a factor of four between 1990 and 2015. In an effort to overcome the obstacles posed by the harsh climate, the rapid urbanization and the large disparities between rural and urban areas that characterized the country, the Government had focused on improving primary health care, including by introducing remote diagnostic services and mobile clinic services. As adolescent health was also a priority, adolescent-friendly clinics had been established throughout the country. The recent re-establishment of the Health Support Fund, which was supported by taxes on alcoholic beverages and tobacco products, had contributed to improvements in the health of the country's children and adolescents.
7. Enrolment in preschool, primary and secondary education had increased considerably since June 2015, when Mongolia had submitted its fifth periodic report. The State Policy on Education had been amended in 2015 with a view to improving the legal framework within which educational institutions operated. The amendments had also touched on the creation of equal learning environments for children with disabilities, the penalization of teachers and tutors who abused their students, the confidentiality of student information, school hygiene and the involvement of teachers, parents, guardians and students themselves in preventing and monitoring violations of children's rights in the

schools. Efforts had been made to improve education for children with disabilities. Teachers of such children were specially trained, and special schools received learning materials specifically designed for their students.

8. For the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the authorities had set up a system that enabled children or their representatives to submit complaints. A call centre with a toll-free hotline had been set up in 2016. The centre, which received some 15,000 calls a month, provided advice on child protection and other related services.

9. Measures had been taken to ensure that the legal proceedings in which child victims of or witnesses to crime were involved did not victimize them anew. The aim of a programme involving partners from both the private sector and public sector was to protect children from the harmful influence of the Internet and other media. The Law on Military Service, adopted in 2016, stated that military personnel were to be recruited for service between the ages of 18 and 25.

10. Mongolia had adopted the Sustainable Development Vision 2030, a national strategy to be implemented in three stages, and drafted a comprehensive national child development and protection plan. The Government was fully committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, by continuing to promote school enrolment and improving social protection. The Mongolian authorities would act in accordance with their belief that the responsibility for providing children with an environment favourable to their growth and development lay with parents, guardians and the State.

11. **Mr. Madi** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee welcomed the State party's ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. The State party's adoption of a number of laws and policies relevant to the Convention was also welcome. He wished to know, however, what efforts it had made to draft and adopt a comprehensive legislative act on the rights of the child. It would also be interesting to have an update on the status of amendments to the Law on Family and the Labour Code.

12. In connection with the coordination of efforts to implement the Convention, he said that the Committee was concerned by reports that the National Authority for Children had not been provided with adequate financial and human resources, as the Committee had recommended in its previous concluding observations (CRC/C/MNG/CO/3-4, para. 12 (b)). He would welcome a comment on the responsibilities of the "child rights envoys" mentioned in the State party's report (CRC/C/MNG/5, para. 15). It would be interesting to know, for instance, how they were trained for their work.

13. The delegation should provide an account of the Government's reaction to a recommendation by the Subcommittee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions that the procedures Mongolia applied to appoint the members of the National Human Rights Commission should be formalized. In addition, the delegation should indicate how the Government had reacted to the recommendations regarding children's rights that had been made by the National Human Rights Commission. A comment on the results of the assessment of the National Programme of Action for the Development and Protection of Children (2002-2010) would be welcome, as would an indication of whether any plans had been made to develop a comprehensive children's rights action plan.

14. He would welcome a comment on reports that corruption, in particular in connection with horse racing and mining, was widespread in the State party and that it could undermine government efforts to protect children whose rights were threatened by those activities. In addition, the delegation should provide information on the efforts made by the State party to train social workers and disseminate the Convention. It would be particularly interesting to know whether school curricula included the main provisions of the Convention.

15. He wished to know how the State party dealt with the challenges posed by mineral exploration and mining. He asked whether there was a mechanism to monitor those activities, what role labour inspectors played in that regard and whether there had been any

violations of the recent decree prohibiting children from working as small-scale miners. In addition, he wondered whether there were any laws to ensure that the effects of mining activities on children were monitored and managed and whether any efforts had been made to resolve disputes between mining companies and herders.

16. The Committee was seriously concerned about the high levels of discrimination against children in the State party. In that connection, he wondered why a legal provision specifically banning discrimination on a number of grounds, which had been adopted in late 2015, would not enter into force until July 2017 and what other measures had been taken to eliminate discrimination against children. He asked what the authorities had done since the publication in 2014 of a study showing that children living in school dormitories were subject to various forms of abuse.

17. He wished to know what efforts the Government had made to ensure that children had the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them. Examples of any cases in which the courts or administrative offices had given due consideration to children's views in coming to a decision would be especially welcome.

18. As a relatively large number of children died in accidents in the State party, he wondered whether any accident-prevention campaigns targeting the public, including children, had been conducted. He encouraged the State party to ensure that all births in the State party, in particular those among herders living in remote areas and Kazakh nationals, were registered. It would be interesting to know what efforts had been made to eliminate statelessness among children and whether the State party had any plans to ratify the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. He would welcome a comment from the delegation on reports that children were not fully informed of their right to free association and that schools rarely had facilities in which children could assemble.

19. **Ms. Sandberg** (Country Rapporteur), noting that the State party had reported that no complaints had been received regarding torture or degrading treatment by the police, asked how the Government ensured that children and parents were aware of the existence of a complaints mechanism. Expressing concern at reports that levels of police violence had increased dramatically following the closure of the Investigative Agency supervised by the State General Prosecutor, she enquired how the State party could be sure that no children had been subject to violence of that kind.

20. Welcoming the ban on corporal punishment in all settings, she noted that the use of such punishment remained widespread, especially in homes, kindergartens and schools, and asked how the legislation in that regard was being enforced, whether any cases of corporal punishment had been prosecuted and what efforts had been made to raise public awareness of the ban and to promote positive methods of child-rearing.

21. Noting that a number of children had reported abuse by parents and close relatives and that such abuse was often fuelled by alcohol, she said that it would be helpful if the delegation could comment on reports that there was no specific policy or system in effect to prevent alcohol-related violence against children. The Committee would welcome any initiatives to combat the widespread cultural acceptance of violence against children, including in schools.

22. She would appreciate more detailed information on the child protection system that was being developed under the Law on Child Protection and any steps that were being taken to increase the number of trained social workers. Noting that the high turnover of civil servants after each election was likely to undermine efforts to protect child rights, she asked why there was such a high turnover and how it could be prevented.

23. She enquired what measures were being taken to prevent violence against children in school dormitories and religious institutions and to make it easier for children to report violence, whether the child helpline 108 was accessible to all children throughout the country, who received the calls made to that helpline and what action was taken in response to those calls. Lastly, in the light of reports of sexual abuse against boys, she asked whether the Government intended to conduct a study or launch an awareness campaign on that issue.

24. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** asked what long-term investments were being made to increase access to key services for all children, especially those from poor communities; what structural measures were being implemented to address the unequal geographical distribution of resources; and what steps were being taken to improve the system of results-based budgeting and to ensure that child rights were taken into account in the budgeting process.

25. In the light of reports of major corruption and conflicts of interest in the medical and tobacco industries, for example, she said that it would be useful to know whether there were plans to establish a system of governance that would tackle those problems. The Committee would appreciate more information on the national programme against corruption that had been adopted on 3 November 2016, including on the objectives, deadlines and indicators that had been decided upon and the mandate of the Independent Agency against Corruption.

26. She asked what steps would be taken to centralize the data collection system, to ensure that data was gathered on all issues relating to child rights and to share data on those issues with all relevant stakeholders. Lastly, she enquired whether civil society had been involved in drafting the State party's report and how much State funding was available to civil society organizations working in the field of child rights.

27. **Ms. Todorova** said that she would like more information on the project that had been undertaken to estimate the cost of providing services for victims of violence and how the findings of that project would affect government policy.

28. **Mr. Cardona Llorens** said that he would like specific examples of cases in which the best interests of the child had been taken into account in judicial and administrative decisions, including information on the reasoning given for those decisions.

29. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** asked, with reference to the strategy to promote child participation mentioned in paragraphs 69 and 70 of the State party's report, whether there was a minimum age for child participation, whether the strategy was still being implemented, what opinions in that respect had been expressed by children and what action had been taken in response. With regard to the children's forums that were held at the local and national levels, he enquired what measures had been taken to encourage children to attend those events and what outcomes had been achieved through child participation. Lastly, he asked what efforts had been made to increase access to information for children from low-income backgrounds and children with visual or hearing impairments.

30. **Mr. Gastaud** asked whether the Government planned to adopt binding legislation on Internet usage, setting out offences and penalties, to supplement the directive mentioned in paragraph 78 of the State party's report. He further enquired whether any orders or injunctions regarding offensive online content had been sent to website owners under that directive and whether the Government had conducted any awareness campaigns on Internet safety, aimed at children, parents, teachers and other professionals. Finally, he said that he would like more information on short-term and long-term measures to protect the right to privacy and the right to one's image. It was unclear whether the media was prevented from disclosing the identity of child victims of abuse or children who were involved in legal proceedings.

The meeting was suspended at 11 a.m. and resumed at 11.25 a.m.

31. **Ms. Mungunchimeg** (Mongolia) said that one of the Government's main objectives was to strengthen and enhance the existing child protection mechanism. It was also working to ensure that children with disabilities enjoyed the same opportunities as children without disabilities.

32. The Government had issued a directive on legislative reform for the period up to 2020; under that directive, amendments would be made to a number of laws, including those on preschool and primary education and on citizenship status. The bills amending the Family Law and the Labour Code had not yet been approved. The parliament, through its standing committee and working groups, was responsible for ensuring that all parliamentary decisions were properly reflected in the relevant legislation. The head of the Cabinet was also responsible for monitoring the implementation of child protection legislation.

33. Under the directive on legislative reform, human rights legislation was being amended to take into account the recommendations of United Nations treaty bodies and to ensure the independent monitoring of human rights issues. The Ministry of Justice and the National Human Rights Commission were drafting new legislation on human rights which would provide for the appointment of a child rights envoy and child rights inspectors. The minister responsible for child-related issues would be the general inspector for child rights; other inspectors would be appointed in accordance with the law and would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of legislation on child rights.

34. Judicial procedure in cases involving children had been established by law. Within that framework, a ministerial decree approving regulations on the enforcement of child rights legislation had been issued in 2016. The Law on Protecting Children's Rights stipulated that each child rights envoy should be appointed in accordance with the unanimous decision of the local children's forum. Any complaints lodged by children or their guardians were examined by the relevant judicial body.

35. The National Council for Children, headed by the Prime Minister, was responsible for monitoring the protection of child rights at the local level. A national report on child-related issues was drawn up by the Council each year, in consultation with local branches of the Council and with the local assemblies of each province and the capital city.

36. **Mr. Altansukh** (Mongolia) said that the Government had replaced the former agency for child-related issues with the National Agency for Child, Youth, Elderly and Family Development, which had the same number of staff but a broader remit. There were branches of that Agency in each of the 21 provinces and in each district of the capital city. Under the bill to amend the Family Law, the organizational structure of the Agency would be expanded to include an additional 600 social workers, who would provide services at the local level. Raising awareness among families and increasing their involvement in child protection and the promotion of child rights was a key area of focus for the Agency. Its budget had increased from Tog 5.7 million in 2015 to Tog 7.2 million in 2016, before decreasing slightly to Tog 5.9 million in 2017; there were plans to increase the budget by 32.8 per cent in 2018.

37. A 24-hour hotline had been set up with over 20 staff, and there were plans to increase that number and to incorporate training activities for family members and social workers. Specialist staff provided services for all aspects related to children's issues, including measures to return street children to their families. Any information received through calls was forwarded to local social services, and there was a vehicle on hand that could be dispatched in emergency situations. Calls could be made in either of the country's two main languages, and there were four channels open to receive calls. In 2014, 430,000 calls had been received between 2014 and 2017, of which around 30 per cent sought counselling and advice; only 1 per cent concerned violations of children's rights. The hotline would be integrated into the police department hotline, with technical support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). There was currently enough capacity to house 14 children in shelters at any one time, which was sufficient to meet current demand.

38. **Mr. Javkhlan** (Mongolia) said that the Government had revised the domestic violence law in 2016, establishing clear definitions of the roles of all stakeholders in protecting children's rights in that regard. Other forms of violence against children were punishable under the Criminal Code of Mongolia. A revised version of the Criminal Code, which would enter into force in July 2017, included rules and established penalties for corporal and psychological punishment of children. The reason for the delay between the adoption and entry into force of the revised Criminal Code was to raise public awareness and to allow time to train the relevant stakeholders.

39. **Ms. Sandberg** that she would like the delegation to specify what types of campaigns were under way to raise awareness of violence against children, including corporal punishment, and asked whether parents received information on positive forms of discipline.

40. **Mr. Javkhlan** (Mongolia) said that police officers, social workers and officials at other institutions received training on the new law on domestic violence. Approximately 1,500 social workers had been trained. Furthermore, training activities had been carried out

among stakeholders in the education sector and had been incorporated into the school curriculum.

41. **Mr. Altansukh** (Mongolia) said that there were just under 500 working groups at the local level to deal with child rights issues, involving police officers and social workers and headed by district governors. Training had been provided to ensure proper implementation of the domestic violence law at district level, and was expected to have been completed within one month.

42. **Ms. Tsolmon** (Mongolia) said that one social worker had been assigned to every secondary school in the country. Children were taught about their status and rights in social science classes in school, and the curriculum was under review and would cover cases where child rights had been violated. The classes were given for one hour per week and emphasized the responsibilities of parents and families in protecting the rights of children. Mechanisms were in place for children to lodge complaints in dormitories, especially regarding any violent conduct. Efforts were made to educate children with a view to eliminating violence and to improve the skills of social workers who worked closely with children in dormitories.

43. Children were given a say in the budget of primary and secondary schools in order to promote a quality, child-friendly learning environment that fostered creative skills and the participation of children from an early age. The Government had recently developed a strategy to encourage a coordinated approach to safeguarding the rights of children. Children in secondary schools could contribute to school newspapers as a way of exercising their right to free assembly and freedom of expression. Furthermore, after-school activities such as debating societies and children's police groups were also organized to help children learn debating skills and become aware of crime and related issues. Although all types of information were freely available in Mongolia, there was a policy in place to protect children from dangerous material online. Furthermore, there were measures in place to prevent schoolchildren from being distracted by the use of mobile telephones.

44. The Government had passed a resolution in 2015 to promote children's self-confidence and boost the development of skills and creativity for their future professional life. The Government allocated almost Tog 2 billion to pay the teachers who ran after-school activities. Furthermore, almost 350 television programmes, designed to inform children of their rights and encourage exercise of freedom of expression, had been created and broadcast nationwide.

45. At present, there were over 500 boarding schools throughout the country, at which two-thirds of the places were occupied by children from herder families. Additional schools had been built since 2012 due to rising demand. There was no record of children's rights violations in dormitories. Nevertheless, a methodology for identifying challenges and improving conditions in dormitories had been established. There was a large number of boarding schools because of the dispersed nature and low density of the population, and there was a need to house children from remote areas. The legislation in place ensured proper conditions and a suitable environment in dormitories.

46. **Ms. Sandberg** said that she wished to know whether the complaints mechanism was child-friendly and whether children were aware of it. Was it independent of boarding schools?

47. **Mr. Madi** said that he was surprised to learn that no violations of children's rights in dormitories had been received. Drawing attention to paragraph 149 of the State party's report (CRC/C/MNG/5), which mentioned that a study had found that "one in every two children reached through the study reported to have been victims of nicknaming and stigma" and that children were "exposed to various forms of abuse", he would like the Government to comment on the study and to state what action had been taken in that regard.

48. **Mr. Javkhlan** (Mongolia) said that the Government had taken steps to promote the best interests of the child, and the "Children's green card campaign" had facilitated children's involvement in the decision-making process. For instance, the authorities had received about 24,000 comments from children on the Law on the Rights of the Child and the Law on Child Protection and had reflected their opinions in the legislation. School

administration authorities had also received some 50,000 comments from children on protection of the school environment. The comments had been analysed and combined under 16 headings and addressed in each school's budgeting procedure.

49. Children's comments and interests were also taken into account by the judiciary. Pursuant to article 14 of the Law on the Family, the views and best interests of children over 7 years of age should be taken into account in the final decision regarding their legal guardian following a divorce. The Supreme Court had issued directives to the courts aimed at enforcing that article and ensuring that children could express their views and submit comments without external influence, primarily in cases involving family disputes and divorce proceedings. The courts had deprived parents of their custodianship of children owing to inadequate performance of their duties in 92 cases considered during a two-year period. A child-friendly court environment was essential to ensure that children were not being subjected to external pressure, and special testimony rooms for children had been established in line with the Code of Criminal Procedure.

50. Mongolian law regulated the right to assemble for peaceful demonstrations. The police did not issue permits for the purpose but they ensured safety and security. Permits were issued by the local governor's office. A total of 10 demonstrations on protection of children's rights had been organized during the past three years: two in 2014, four in 2016 and four in 2017.

51. **Ms. Sandberg** noted that many children in the State party were deprived of parental care and supervision. When parents migrated for work either inside the country or abroad, they often left child-headed households behind them. She enquired about the measures taken to support such families and their children who were bereft of parental care.

52. She asked whether safeguards and criteria were applicable to decisions to place children in alternative care settings. Could parents take such decisions or was the approval of a court or other official body required? She enquired about arrangements to enable children in alternative care to remain in contact with their families.

53. Noting that many children were placed in institutions, she stressed the importance of seeking community-based family-type care and encouraged the State party to develop its foster care system. She asked whether regulations governing dormitories and other institutions for children had been adopted and whether the staff were properly trained. According to the reply to question No. 7 of the list of issues, monitoring and evaluation of alternative care arrangements had been conducted in November 2016. She asked whether regular monitoring procedures were planned, whether a child-friendly and independent complaint mechanism had been established, and whether children's situation was regularly reviewed to enable them to return to their parents. She also asked whether measures were being taken to improve the situation of children living in monasteries.

54. She expressed concern about the existence of disparities in child health care between rural and urban areas and between poor and wealthy sectors of society. Other challenges included: difficulties of access to high-quality health care, especially in rural areas, where doctors' proficiency and communication skills reportedly left much to be desired; shortages of medical facilities; and overcrowding of hospitals in urban areas. Poor families were frequently unable to afford the cost of travelling long distances to health-care facilities. Another problem was corruption and the need to make additional informal payments for health care. She enquired about action to resolve such problems and the existence of preventive health programmes.

55. With regard to mental health, a survey of children in the 12 to 16 age group had found that a large percentage of them had contemplated or attempted suicide. She asked whether the State party had undertaken a study of the root causes of such distress and whether it had developed any plans to address the problem, for instance by introducing a system of psychological counselling or treatment in schools, and by training child psychologists. She asked whether there were any school-based nurses.

56. The State party had failed to reply to the Committee's question in the list of issues regarding adolescent health. Noting the large number of teenage pregnancies, she asked whether adolescents had access to contraceptives. She also wished to know why the sexual

and reproductive health course in schools had been eliminated in 2014 and included in the course on biology. Adolescents should be involved in developing policies on sexual and reproductive health.

57. Substance abuse was reportedly widespread among adolescents. Alcohol was frequently used in dormitories to relieve stress or in response to peer pressure. She enquired about action to address the problem by the social welfare and child protection system.

58. The National Committee on reducing air pollution had approved an action plan to reduce air pollution to be implemented in 2017. She enquired about measures taken to date as well as action to promote access to clean water and sanitation. The list of issues had included a question regarding the protection of children from climate change and environmental degradation. The State party had listed a number of measures, but the Committee would prefer to see a more comprehensive policy involving children.

59. There was a lack of continuity in educational policies due to governmental and public-sector instability. School enrolment had declined, the illiteracy ratio had increased and there were high dropout rates. Access to education was particularly difficult for children from poor backgrounds, remote areas or herding families, children with disabilities, and children belonging to ethnic and linguistic minorities. The cost of uniforms, learning materials and transport dissuaded many parents from enrolling their children in school. She asked what measures were being taken by the State party to address those problems.

60. Children who lived in school dormitories sometimes started schooling at a late age and therefore lagged behind other children. She asked whether the State party had considered any alternatives, such as online accredited classes combined with parent tuition systems. The Committee had been informed that conditions in school dormitories were not child-friendly, that they were understaffed and that the children received inadequate emotional care. She enquired about action to improve the situation and to ensure that children's voices were heard.

61. She asked about the results of the survey on the quality of education launched in 2014 and about measures taken to address poor teaching skills, too many students per teacher and low-quality learning materials. What steps were being taken to prevent the funding of private schools from leading to a deterioration in conditions in public schools? The fact that two or three shifts were required per day in certain overcrowded urban schools had reportedly led to a decline in the quality of tuition. Moreover, children faced safety issues when walking home in the evening or at night.

62. With regard to school hygiene, she noted that a Law on hygiene had been enacted in February 2016, but she enquired about the practical measures being taken to ensure its implementation.

63. She requested an explanation of the challenges faced by the State party in ensuring bilingual education for Kazakhs, for instance by providing the requisite textbooks and teachers.

64. Children attending temples or religious schools were deprived of basic education. The State party had developed an educational equivalency module with UNICEF for 248 students, but she enquired about the situation of the remaining 2,000 or more students.

65. **Mr. Madi** said that the situation of asylum-seeking and refugee children had not been addressed in the report, which stated that there were no official statistics on children seeking protection. He requested information regarding legal provisions and regulations applicable to them.

66. The National Programme to eradicate the worst forms of child labour had ended in 2016. He enquired about the outcome. He requested the State party to comment on an apparent inconsistency between the compulsory education age and the minimum age for child labour. He noted that, notwithstanding the applicable legislation and regulations, many underage children were still employed, including in hazardous labour. He enquired about relevant action by labour inspectors and cases in which violators of the legislation had been prosecuted.

67. He welcomed the legislation and policies applicable to children living in the streets, especially the abrogation in 2013 of the Law on Temporary Detention of Children without Supervision, and the policy to improve their registration and protection provided for in the Government Action Plan 2016-2020. He requested additional information on the policy and asked whether any study had been undertaken on the number of children living in the streets and the root causes.

68. According to the Ministry of Labour, over 10,000 children, many of them aged between 7 to 10 years, had been registered as child jockeys in 2016. During the period from 2012 to 2014, 326 child jockeys had received emergency medical treatment and 18 had died on falling from their horses. The children also dropped out of school in order to receive training and participate in races. He asked whether the State party had considered prohibiting the employment of children under 18 years of age as jockeys and including such jobs in the list of hazardous occupations. In February 2016 the Minister of Labour had issued a ban on the participation of children aged under 16 in horseracing between 1 November and 1 May, but in February 2017 he had lifted the ban on races during the spring season. He enquired about the motive for lifting the ban. The Committee had recently been informed that the Minister of Labour had established a working group to improve legal protection for child jockeys and to increase the minimum age. He requested further information regarding the objectives.

69. The Committee welcomed the State party's commitment during the universal periodic review procedure (A/HRC/30/6/Add.1) to establish a comprehensive framework on juvenile justice that was in conformity with international standards. He asked whether it had already taken steps to guarantee qualified, independent and free legal aid to juveniles in conflict with the law, to establish alternatives to detention, to ensure that child detainees were segregated from adults, including in remand detention, and to protect child victims and witnesses of criminal acts, for instance by reserving separate rooms for their testimony during legal proceedings.

70. He asked whether children were incarcerated with their mothers and, if so, the types of facilities and support provided. Turning to the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, he noted that the State party had failed to provide information on the definition and criminalization of the sale of children. It had stated in its reply to question No. 13 of the list of issues that criminal legislation had been amended to provide for the imprisonment of persons who forced prostitution on underage children. He requested the State party to specify the age in question.

71. With regard to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, he asked whether the State party had introduced an independent complaint system for children in military schools and whether the recruitment of children under 18 years of age by non-State armed groups had been criminalized. Lastly, he wished to know whether the State party had established extraterritorial jurisdiction over all crimes committed under both Optional Protocols.

72. **Ms. Todorova** said that the State party had provided information regarding inter-country adoption but none regarding domestic adoption. According to the report, 10,300 children had been adopted domestically between 2009 and 2013. She enquired about the procedures for including children in the list, the criteria applied and the authorities responsible for taking a final decision in each case.

73. She asked how the issues of subsidiarity and the best interests of the child were applied in inter-country adoption. The report mentioned two authorities responsible for implementing the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. She asked which of them was the decision-making authority.

74. **Mr. Cardona Llorens** said that, according to the report, 4.1 per cent of the State party's children lived with some type of disability. Hence, if there were some 910,000 children living in the country, about 37,500 would be children with disabilities. However, the figures provided for children living with their families or in care centres totalled only about 12,000. He enquired about the remaining children. He also wished to know how many attended ordinary or special schools.

75. Welcoming the enactment of the Law on the Right of People with Disabilities, he enquired about the availability of resources and staff to ensure its implementation throughout the country. He requested information regarding the education system for children with disabilities, especially those with sensory impairments or with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. He understood that the State party adopted a medical rather than an inclusive approach to children with disabilities, placing them, for the most part, in sanatoria or health-care centres rather than in residential facilities where they were in contact with other children. He enquired about the type of care provided to institutionalized children.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.