



**Convention against Torture
and Other Cruel, Inhuman
or Degrading Treatment
or Punishment**

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**Committee against Torture
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Summary record of the 968th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 10 November 2010, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Grossman

Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention
(continued)

Second periodic report of Cambodia (continued)

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

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention *(continued)*

Second periodic report of Cambodia (continued) (CAT/C/KHM/2; CAT/C/KHM/Q/2; HRI/CORE/1/Add.94)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Cambodia took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Sun Suon** (Cambodia), replying to questions the Committee had asked at the previous meeting, said that the Cambodian Human Rights Committee had recently conducted inspections of 24 municipal and provincial prisons and concluded that there had been significant improvements in the management and detention conditions in many of them. It remained impossible to fully meet international standards owing to the lack of resources in his country, which was classified as least developed. However, the authorities were implementing measures to improve conditions, such as transferring prisoners from overcrowded facilities to those with more space, building new prisons and expanding existing ones. Action was taken to monitor prisoners' health, particularly as overcrowding was often detrimental to health. The Cambodian Human Rights Committee had found that all prisons had an adequate supply of clean water. Details of additional improvements were provided in paragraph 42 of the periodic report.
3. In order to combat corruption in prisons, each facility had internal rules and regulations. Any prison staff who breached them were subject to disciplinary action ranging from a verbal warning to dismissal and criminal prosecution. Details of the prohibition of torture by police officers and prison staff were set out in paragraphs 45 to 47 of the report.
4. Efforts to eliminate child labour from the ready-made garment sector had been successful, and measures were currently being taken to mirror that achievement in the ship-breaking industry and in the informal sector. In order to encourage children to attend school, primary and secondary education was available free of charge. The treatment of children who were in conflict with the law was in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant international standards.
5. His Government had concluded a tripartite agreement with Viet Nam and UNHCR which regulated the treatment of Montagnard asylum-seekers. It had an excellent constructive relationship with UNHCR and the Immigration Law was applied in all cases. It regretted any negative experiences asylum-seekers or refugees might have had in Cambodia, whether they were Chinese Uighurs or members of any other community.
6. While domestic legislation did not contain a definition of torture, under the Constitution international instruments to which Cambodia was a party were automatically applicable in domestic courts. It was therefore up to judges to invoke the Convention definition of torture in their rulings.
7. When the Pol Pot regime had ended, there had been only seven lawyers in the entire country. There was now a Bar Association with some 600 members, and there were over 200 judges and prosecutors, 10 of whom were women. One female prosecutor was currently working as a co-prosecutor in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.
8. The Anti-Corruption Law had been promulgated on 17 April 2010. It provided for the establishment of the Supreme National Council against Corruption, which was responsible for strategic planning and developing national policy, and the Anti-Corruption Unit. The Unit was in charge of day-to-day business, receiving complaints, raising awareness, carrying out investigations and curbing offences involving corruption. It had

decided to pursue a policy of zero tolerance, regardless of the entity or political group involved. The Law provided that the Unit should undertake its work independently and be assisted by specially accredited police officers. Some 14 such officers had been trained for that work by August 2010 and a second contingent would be ready to start work at the beginning of 2011. The Unit would focus on public education, prevention and law enforcement, all backed by a strategic partnership. It was currently preparing its background documents and rules of procedure in readiness for launching its two-year action plan early in 2011. In addition, Cambodia had been a full member of the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific under the joint leadership of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 2003.

9. **Mr. Ke Sovann** (Cambodia) said that, while domestic criminal legislation did not specifically state that exceptional circumstances could not be adduced to justify torture, torture was defined as a criminal offence and was strictly prohibited in his country. Anyone who perpetrated torture was liable to punishment under the law.

10. Cambodian judges, prosecutors and other law enforcement officials were fully aware of the international instruments to which the country was a party. After an instrument was ratified, the text was sent to the judicial and executive branches of government, with the recommendation that it should be brought to the attention of the relevant officials through training and other means for action and implementation.

11. His Government was aware of the need to speed up the adoption of the Organic Law on the Organization and Functioning of Courts, the Law on Amendment of the Supreme Council of Magistracy, and the Law on the Status of Judges and Prosecutors. That was a high priority on the Government's reform agenda.

12. He stressed that preparation of further anti-corruption legislation was under way. An investigation into current allegations of corruption would commence in the near future.

13. Although no data on torture cases were available for the previous five years, some cases involving torture had been dealt with by the courts during that time. The lack of a database was a shortcoming that the State party would rectify, although it would need assistance in compiling and classifying cases.

14. Law enforcement officials were able to carry out investigations concerning criminal activity, including torture, although they could be improved. Further training on procedures, methods and collection of evidence was required.

15. Complaints concerning torture or ill-treatment at the hands of law enforcement officials could be lodged with the Ministry of the Interior. Administrative punishments for such crimes included dismissal; where a serious offence had been committed, the official would be obliged to stand trial.

16. Persons detained in custody were allowed access to legal counsel within 24 hours of their arrest and, in the case of a minor, a parent or legal guardian was informed without delay. A suspect could be detained for a maximum of 48 hours before charges were brought. In exceptionally complicated cases, an extension of 24 hours could be granted to the police.

17. The Bar Association of the Kingdom of Cambodia operated independently with its own code of conduct that incorporated international legal principles and practices. The Government provided some financial support to enable members of the Bar to represent needy people.

18. The first Khmer Rouge prosecution, Case No. 1, had been completed by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) in 2010 and Case No. 2 would begin shortly. The Government was pleased with the steady progress that had been

achieved; it would pursue justice for the Cambodian people while maintaining peace, security and stability.

19. Compensation had been paid to all victims of the Khmer Rouge regime. The country had been rebuilt despite the economic embargo imposed during the 1980s and it now enjoyed peace and economic prosperity. The importance of setting up a rehabilitation scheme to assist victims of the regime was recognized. Some government hospitals and private clinics provided psychological support services for victims of torture. Cambodia would improve the standard of living of its people and the credibility of its Government once the Convention had been fully implemented. Nevertheless, it would have to adopt a gradual approach to implementation since the country faced financial constraints. Approximately one third of the population lived below the poverty line. The Government was pursuing a strategy of poverty reduction through economic and social development which, it was hoped, would help to reduce crime.

20. It was unfortunate that the report of an NGO cited the previous day had not been balanced.

21. **Mr. Nouth Savna** (Cambodia) said that, since its inception, the national preventive mechanism (NPM) had worked with stakeholders, especially development partners, on capacity-building and the introduction of legislation in conformity with the Optional Protocol. Despite a lack of resources, the NPM had made significant progress in those areas. The NPM secretariat looked forward with enthusiasm to receiving training from OHCHR on how to conduct interviews with detainees, prepare questionnaires, conduct site visits and administer compensation for victims. His Government had sought to find a balance between maintaining the independence of individual members of the NPM and ensuring that, in a culture that revered authority, the mechanism carried sufficient weight through the involvement of senior figures such as the Deputy Prime Minister.

22. He could not provide immediate answers to some of the questions raised by Committee members the previous day since they were politically sensitive or confidential. He undertook to make investigations and submit answers at a later date.

23. The NPM received complaints concerning all forms of torture or ill-treatment by the authorities inflicted on detainees or other persons in government facilities. Advice had been taken from OHCHR on improving the complaints process through the installation of a hotline and complaint boxes in those facilities. Appropriate cost-effective measures would be designed to enable complaints to be filed in the criminal courts and to ensure that victims were given appropriate access to justice and compensation. The current NPM mandate did not provide for unannounced visits to places of detention, although members could exercise their right to visit on a regular basis and conduct interviews with detainees in an environment free from reprisal and duress.

24. With regard to reparations for survivors of the Khmer Rouge, the ECCC had set up a special process to prepare for the participation of a large number of claimants for indemnification and their legal representatives with a view to making moral and possibly financial compensation. The new reparations scheme would commence with the proceedings for Case No. 2 and beyond.

25. **Mr. Kong Chhan** (Cambodia), addressing the issue of human trafficking, said that every year a number of Cambodians migrated from rural to urban areas in Cambodia and neighbouring countries to seek employment. Victims of trafficking were lured to Thailand with the promise of well-paid jobs, and from there they were further trafficked to Malaysia. Men, women and children were all victims of trafficking. Vietnamese women were trafficked into Cambodia for sexual exploitation and Cambodian children were trafficked to Viet Nam, primarily in order to beg.

26. In 2008, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Veterans' and Youth Rehabilitation had received and rehabilitated 105 women and child victims who had been trafficked for sexual exploitation to Thailand. A further 745 Cambodian victims of forced labour trafficking had been repatriated from Viet Nam and 4 Vietnamese women victims had been sent back to Viet Nam.

27. Cambodia and Thailand had signed a memorandum of understanding in 2003 on eliminating the trafficking of women and children and assisting trafficking victims, and had adopted common guidelines on repatriation and reintegration. In 2005, Cambodia had signed a similar bilateral cooperation agreement with Viet Nam. Agreements had also been reached with Thailand and Viet Nam on procedures for identification and repatriation of victims. Cambodia had entered into an agreement with Malaysia whereby the Cambodian Embassy in that country used an International Organization for Migration screening form to identify victims of trafficking. Victims were repatriated into the care of the Ministry of Social Affairs, which began a family tracing process. NGOs helped the Ministry to identify and assess victims and assisted with their reintegration and aftercare. Reintegration planning was also conducted by the Ministry. Between 2007 and 2009, the Cambodian National Council for Children, in cooperation with the Ministry and NGOs, had issued policy guidelines and minimum standards of protection for child victims of trafficking.

28. Reintegration took place via a short-term transit centre where social workers provided intensive psychosocial support. A long-term shelter was provided for victims who could not be returned to their families. A victim could choose to return to his or her community rather than receiving care in a shelter.

29. The Government had taken action to ensure that the rights of victims were protected. In 2007, it had founded a High-Level Working Group to combat human trafficking. The Ministry for Social Affairs had issued various directives concerning human trafficking and in 2007 it had developed a policy on alternative care for child victims of trafficking. In 2005, a National Committee on Street People had been set up to respond to the needs of street children and prevent migration. It had founded a social affairs centre to provide recovery and reintegration services, including vocational training for women and children. Contrary to reports, the social affairs centre was not a detention centre. UNICEF and OHCHR had assisted the Government to recruit independent consultants to provide services at the centre.

30. The Government was currently developing a juvenile justice bill in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including children themselves. The bill would address problems such as the imprisonment of young offenders. Social care was provided for children whose mothers were in prison.

31. **Mr. Sun Suon** (Cambodia) said that, with its partners in ASEAN, his Government had made progress in assisting the victims of human trafficking.

32. The national preventive mechanism was empowered by its terms of reference: to conduct regular examinations of persons deprived of their liberty in detention centres in order to protect them against torture and ill-treatment; to make recommendations based on United Nations standards to relevant authorities with a view to improving conditions of detention and preventing torture; to visit detention centres throughout the country in order to obtain information from detainees and to assess conditions of detention; to make proposals concerning existing and draft legislation; and to assist the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture in fulfilling its functions under article 20 of the Optional Protocol.

33. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) had made significant progress in preventing impunity and a repeat of past atrocities. Case No. 1 had been completed and Case No. 2 involving four persons was under way. The United Nations Secretary-General had visited Cambodia in October 2010 and had made an excellent

statement on the ECCC proceedings. Moreover, on 23 February 2009 the Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia and the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs had issued a joint statement, in which they welcomed the significant achievements recorded by the ECCC since the previous meeting, notably the commencement of the public hearings in the first trial before the ECCC, and recognized the importance of the progress made towards addressing impunity for the crimes of the former Khmer Rouge regime. They had expressed appreciation of the progress made by the joint sessions in their meetings during January and February 2009 towards strengthening the ECCC's human resources management, including anti-corruption measures. Successive proposals presented by each side in the joint sessions had brought the two sides to greater mutual understanding. They had agreed on the essential elements of a structure devoted to strengthening the ECCC's entire administration. The structure would ensure the requirements of due process of law, including full protection of staff against any possible retaliation for good-faith reporting of wrongdoing.

34. **Ms. Gaer**, First Country Rapporteur, thanked the delegation for using the brief time available since the previous meeting to prepare so many replies to the Committee's questions.

35. The delegation had stressed the need to view the State party's compliance with the Convention in the context of Cambodia's recent history. The Committee naturally took such circumstances into account, but the Convention was a global instrument that must be applied in all contexts. She had been greatly impressed by the scale of the State party's cooperation with other countries and international bodies and by the fact that some 3,000 NGOs were active in Cambodia. However, in the final analysis responsibility for implementing the Convention lay with the Government.

36. She invited the delegation to comment on recent threats to close down the OHCHR field office in Cambodia.

37. The Committee had asked many questions the previous day about a troubling lack of accountability and allegations of corruption. The answers provided were not entirely satisfactory.

38. With regard to returned asylum-seekers, the delegation claimed that the UNHCR presence guaranteed that the procedure would run smoothly. However, the decision to sign a sub-decree terminating the refugee status of 20 Uighurs had been taken by the Cambodian authorities just two days before their refoulement and not by UNHCR. She asked whether article 3 of the Convention had been taken into account when their status had been determined and whether their status had been monitored.

39. She appreciated the information that had been provided on the definition of torture. According to the delegation, certain points that were not explicitly stated in the definition were nonetheless applicable. She asked for a copy of the text.

40. The delegation had also stated that the Constitution contained a reference to international treaties, which were therefore applicable in domestic law. She wondered whether, in practice, public officials were aware of the fact that the provisions of the Convention concerning, for instance, evidentiary standards, charging and sentencing in cases of torture and ill-treatment were applicable under domestic law.

41. She commended the ECCC decision of 10 May 2010 on the admissibility of Ieng Sary's appeal. The pretrial chamber had explicitly stated in paragraph 35 of its decision that evidence was evaluated in accordance with international legal standards and that the law applicable in Cambodia included international instruments such as the Convention against Torture. Paragraph 37 stated that the relevance of certain documents in the Kaing Guek Eav "Duch" case was limited because they had been obtained by means of torture, and

paragraph 38 emphasized that article 15 of the Convention was to be strictly applied and that any statement obtained through torture could not be used to determine the truth or for any other purpose. She asked whether the decision would be widely circulated and become part of Cambodian law and practice.

42. The delegation had mentioned that new prisons were being built, but if imprisonment rates continued at the current level the question of alternatives to imprisonment should also be given serious consideration. She asked what proportion of prison monitoring visits were unannounced.

43. Circular No. 006 issued by the Ministry of the Interior stipulated that anyone who perpetrated torture would be subject to “demotion or expulsion from the police force”. Noting that 26 prison guards or officials had been punished for physically abusing, degrading or insulting prisoners, she asked whether any of them had been prosecuted.

44. Although the Constitution required judges to apply international treaties and the Convention definition of torture, no judge had ever referred to the Convention in a ruling. She therefore asked how judges implemented the prohibition of torture. Were there any statistics available on complaints and prosecutions?

45. As corruption was an extremely serious issue, she asked for precise information on the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Law.

46. With regard to self-management committees in prisons, the Committee had been informed by people who had interviewed prisoners that although they had been launched for the purpose of assisting law enforcement officials, their members had actually begun to abuse other prisoners. In addition to beating new prisoners, they compelled prisoners to pay for medical visits, larger cell space, better food, outdoor exercise and family visits. Unaccountable non-State actors thus seemed to operate freely while the prison authorities remained indifferent. How were people appointed to self-management committees, what complaint procedures were available and what measures were taken to protect complainants?

47. Arrested persons were reportedly allowed access to a lawyer only after 24 hours. It was essential to allow access from the time of arrest since ill-treatment — for instance, to obtain a confession — frequently occurred during that period. Extrajudicial settlements were apparently also quite common during the first 24 hours, involving in some cases a payment for release. Registration books were sometimes left open and documentation was incomplete. She asked for assurances of the possibility of contacting a lawyer from the time of arrest.

48. She was concerned about the delegation’s allegation that NGO reports were unbalanced, that they failed to acknowledge the Government’s achievements and that they were unacceptable. It sounded like a warning to NGOs to modify their behaviour. The Committee considered that NGOs had a major role to play in monitoring the well-being of individuals and the performance of Governments. In November 2009, the Cambodian Prime Minister had allegedly stated that the Government respected the local and international NGOs whose activities served humanity and helped the Government, and that they would not be threatened by the draft legislation on NGOs. He had added, however, that some NGOs whose activities seemed to serve the opposition party would be scared of the legislation. Some 230 NGOs had subsequently released a statement to the effect that the time was not right for an NGO law. She would appreciate further information on the status of the law, and also assurances that the function of NGOs was properly understood. Criticism of Government action should not be criminalized and she was concerned about the implication that NGOs which supported an opposition party should be regulated. She trusted that human rights NGOs, which performed valuable work in aid of victims of torture and persons at risk of ill-treatment, would not be subjected to reprisals.

49. She gathered that the national preventive mechanism would be composed of members of the executive branch because the Cambodian people, for cultural reasons, revered seniority and authority. The Optional Protocol, however, stipulated that the mechanism should be independent. She invited the delegation to comment on the discrepancy.

50. Some of the Committee's questions had been described as too sensitive or "too subjectively complex to answer". Yet the speaker had assured the Committee that the questions would be investigated in due course. She would appreciate further clarification of the comment.

51. **Ms. Sveaass**, Second Country Rapporteur, said that she was fully aware of all the difficulties the State party had encountered over the years and of the scale of the work remaining to be done. She was impressed by the array of plans, programmes and laws that were already being implemented or were envisaged.

52. She understood that public confidence and a sense that the Government was concerned about people's welfare was extremely important, especially in a post-conflict environment. The idea that change was leading to economic prosperity, security and peace might compensate to some extent the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge era. Yet the eradication of fear would take time. It was therefore essential to create mechanisms that would allow individuals, families and communities to file complaints and report cases of injustice. Rape victims, for instance, must be guaranteed the right to complain and to receive appropriate care and redress. She therefore strongly urged the State party to strengthen such mechanisms and make them readily available.

53. She asked whether representatives of civil society would be included in the national preventive mechanism.

54. She also wished to hear more about the proposed legislation concerning NGOs. Any restrictions on their action might be undemocratic or prevent them from performing their role as watchdogs.

55. When the Committee prepared for its dialogue with a State party, it carefully weighed up all the information available from the State party itself, other treaty bodies, and national and international NGOs. There had been some serious allegations concerning, for instance, the situation in the Prey Speu facility during the period from 2006 to 2008. She wished to know whether the allegations had been investigated and whether any offenders had been brought to justice. Even if allegations did not seem to be well-founded, they should nevertheless be investigated, especially when they involved ill-treatment of vulnerable groups such as minors or victims of human trafficking.

56. She took it that provision had been made for proper monitoring of returnees to Viet Nam or other countries and also for the care of persons repatriated to Cambodia. She asked for further details of the rehabilitation programmes mentioned by the delegation, and assurances that the facilities concerned were not unlawful detention centres where violations of the Convention might take place.

57. She enquired about the regulations governing self-management committees in prisons. Could sanctions be imposed if unlawful action took place?

58. The Committee had been assured by the delegation that regulations and codes of conduct were applicable to police officers and prison guards, and that sanctions were imposed for ill-treatment and torture. She gathered, however, that no case based on complaints against police officers or prison guards had been heard in a criminal court. No statistics had been provided concerning administrative or judicial proceedings and their outcome. She stressed that judicial action should be taken not just in murder cases but also in cases involving torture and ill-treatment.

59. There had been some serious complaints about the treatment of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom people in both Viet Nam and Cambodia, concerning for instance the lack of identity cards, denial of certain rights and loss of land. She asked what measures would be taken to guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples.

60. She had noted with great interest that doctors were being trained to provide treatment and rehabilitation services for torture victims and victims of sexual violence. She hoped that they would also provide assistance to persons appearing before the ECCC.

61. **Mr. Mariño Menéndez** commended the Government for its efforts to protect children against the worst forms of child labour and asked whether children born in Cambodia automatically acquired Cambodian citizenship and the corresponding protections enjoyed by citizens. He wondered whether members of the Khmer Krom minority were entitled to Cambodian citizenship and whether there were any cases of Khmer Krom being deported to Viet Nam.

62. He wished to know more about the Anti-Terrorism Law and to what extent it complied with international standards on pretrial detention, access to justice and access to legal counsel. He was concerned that basic human rights were being violated during the land grabs taking place in the country, and asked what measures were being taken to protect individuals who were forcibly displaced. It seemed that trade unionists were being persecuted throughout Cambodia, and asked what measures were in place to protect them and what judicial action had been taken following the death of Chea Vichea.

63. **Mr. Gaye** said that not only should the definition of torture in article 1 of the Convention be incorporated into domestic law, but torture and ill-treatment should also be criminalized and carry appropriate penalties. Paragraph 9 of the State party's report stated that a judge could use the writ of *capias* without issuing a summons in advance. That seemed to be a step backwards in terms of protecting individual freedoms since an individual might fail to appear simply because he was not aware of the court case against him. He asked whether Cambodian law provided for alternatives to imprisonment, which would help to solve the problem of prison overcrowding and also help to reintegrate offenders into society.

64. He wondered how public officials who were given illegal orders could protect themselves from reprisals by their superiors if they refused to carry them out. According to information from NGOs, women prisoners were often victims of sexual violence and ill-treatment, which might be explained by the lack of women prison guards mentioned in paragraph 54 of the report. He thanked the delegation for the information provided on the competence of the Constitutional Council, but he still believed it would be useful to include a provision in the Constitution expressly stipulating the legal authority of international instruments.

65. **Ms. Belmir** said that in many cases young offenders were victims of ill-treatment and should thus be treated as victims rather than criminals. A more holistic strategy should be used to address their needs and end the cycle of delinquency.

66. **Mr. Wang Xuexian** said that, because of the varying terminology used in the delegation's replies, in the Constitution and in the decision of the Constitutional Council, it was not clear to him whether or not international human rights instruments were directly applicable in the State party.

67. **The Chairperson** asked what procedures were used to appoint judges and to remove those who did not meet professional standards. The Organic Law on the Organization and Functioning of Courts and the Law on Amendment of the Supreme Council of Magistracy had been submitted to parliament in 2002 but were still pending; he would appreciate an update on that situation. He wished to know the total number of judges

in the country, the number of women judges, the total number of lawyers and the number of women lawyers. He commended Cambodia for its progressive legislation on marital rape and asked how many convictions had been handed down in rape cases in general and in cases of marital rape in particular.

68. He requested further information on the State regulations concerning admission to the Bar Association, including how many persons were admitted. The national preventive mechanism should have the authority to carry out unannounced visits to places of detention. While it was important for members of that mechanism to be respected persons holding positions of authority, conflicts of interest must be avoided. Thus, members should not belong to the agencies supervised by the mechanism.

69. **Mr. Sun Suon** (Cambodia) recalled the tragic history of his country and emphasized the challenges facing it in its attempt to close that dark chapter of history and look to the future. His Government encouraged the participation of civil society, and both local and national NGOs were doing important human rights work. The major challenges were to build a constructive dialogue with those organizations and to prevent the politicization of their work, because democracy in Cambodia was young and fragile. He asked the Committee to take account of achievements to date, such as reducing extreme poverty and raising the standard of living.

70. He recognized the need for a national human rights institution; the Government was taking steps to set up such an institution, but doing so would take time. The independence of the national preventive mechanism was also an important issue, but having such a mechanism in the first place was at least a step forward. The privatization of land after the Khmer Rouge regime had resulted in land grabbing by both foreign and national investors, and the Government was trying to regulate that situation. The Government sometimes received conflicting signals from the Committee. It had previously been criticized for not regulating NGOs, and now that it had adopted the NGO Law the Committee had asked why it was restricting NGOs. Nevertheless, it accepted its shortcomings and was committed to implementing the Committee's recommendations.

71. The Constitution clearly stipulated that all Khmer Krom were Cambodians; they were therefore not a minority group in Cambodia, though they might be in Viet Nam. However, citizens with dual nationality did fall under a different jurisdiction, which applied equally to all Cambodians with dual nationality, whatever the other country. Poverty was the root cause of child labour, and Cambodia was making clear progress in abolishing that practice through institutions such as the Cambodian National Council for Children.

72. The Government believed in national reconciliation, yet bringing the Khmer Rouge to justice through the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia was difficult because of the country's painful past. The most important aspect of that process was healing the wounds left by that regime. Corruption was a problem and his Government was committed to holding corrupt officials accountable, but that would be a long process requiring public awareness campaigns and significant human and financial resources.

73. **The Chairperson** thanked the delegation for the commitment it had shown and asked it to send any further replies to the secretariat in writing.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.