



Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Sixty-second session

Summary record of the 1335th meeting*

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 27 October 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Hayashi

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* No summary record was issued for the 1334th meeting.

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

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Eighth periodic report of the Russian Federation (CEDAW/C/RUS/8; CEDAW/C/RUS/Q/8 and Add.1)

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

2. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was composed of a wide range of Government representatives, including from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Migration Service, the Office of the Procurator-General, the Federal Assembly — the parliament of the Russian Federation — and others. The membership of the delegation reflected the comprehensive approach taken by the Russian Federation to implementing the Convention. The report under consideration took into account the various alternative reports submitted to the Committee by Russian and foreign non-governmental organizations, including women's NGOs. His Government was grateful to the members of civil society who had raised questions about gender equality in the country and stood ready to listen to their constructive criticisms and work with them to address their legitimate concerns.

3. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action would remain of particular relevance beyond 2015. The Government welcomed the political declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/CN.6/2015/L.1*) and recognized the Commission on the Status of Women of the United Nations as the leading institution for the promotion of gender equality.

4. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection was responsible for coordinating the efforts of the authorities on gender matters. It had a division within the Department of Demographic Policy and Social Protection that focused on women's issues. Furthermore, the Ministry had a separate division — the Coordinating Council on Gender Issues — comprised of representatives of various federal authorities and voluntary associations, which had developed a plan of action for the implementation of the Committee's recommendations, such as raising awareness about the Convention, challenging stereotypes, increasing employment opportunities for women and combatting violence against women, including in the North Caucasus region. The Council had organized conferences on such violence and human trafficking and had drafted a bill on the prevention of domestic violence, which had been supported by the Government.

5. Gender equality was above all a matter of economic equality and the independence of women. Women enjoyed a higher level of education than men. They made up nearly 49 per cent of the economically active population. The majority of women worked on a contractual basis. The Government was making every effort to ensure that women were able to build successful careers while also making it possible for them to found a family and raise children. It was striving to end discriminatory practices that stood in the way of women's employment rights, among other things through the adoption of laws against discrimination at work on the basis of gender, family status and other factors.

6. The rights of persons with family obligations — both mothers and fathers — were protected by law. It was prohibited to dismiss women from their posts on the grounds of pregnancy or men who were the sole breadwinners or carers of children. Fathers and mothers alike, or any other carer, were granted leave to care for their

children. Pregnant women working part time also enjoyed certain guarantees. For example, the contracts of part-time employees who went on maternity leave were to be extended until the end of that leave. Earlier, such contracts had been extended only until the end of the period of pregnancy.

7. Considerable progress had been made in improving the conditions of work and protecting women against occupational diseases. Work done in that area had made it possible for the Government to draw up a list of harmful and hazardous work for which the use of women's labour was prohibited.

8. Women were entitled to take maternity leave until the child reached the age of 3. However, studies had shown that the majority of women wished to return to work earlier than that period and the Government had therefore worked to establish new preschools and kindergartens. As a result, by 2016, all families with children between 3 and 7 years of age would be able to place their children in such schools. The Government was also working towards increasing the number of nursery school places available for children under 3.

9. All education in the Russian Federation was based on State standards. Education was free and all children must be enrolled in school, regardless of gender or ethnic, religious or social background. Ethnic and cultural minorities received public support for the study of their languages, history, literature and traditional arts and crafts. Education was secular. However, there was some room for compromise which allowed for the provision of secular education along with elements of traditional education.

10. The Government was making great efforts to improve the state of health of the population, including the reduction in the mortality rate, the provision of perinatal health care and greater access to reproductive health services for women and girls. In recent years, significant advances had been made in the area of reproductive health, alcohol and tobacco dependence and assistance to drug addicts, including their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

11. The monthly State benefits for families with children had been significantly increased. The main beneficiaries were women who did not work. The Government had also adjusted the benefits so that such families could maintain their purchasing power. Additional support was provided to families upon the birth of a second or subsequent child. The time spent caring for a child up to the age of 18 months was counted as pensionable service.

12. In 2014, the Russian Federation had adopted a State family policy framework for the period up to 2025, which provided in particular for the support of low-income and young families. The framework also envisaged a range of measures aimed at preventing domestic violence.

13. The Government attached importance to increasing women's participation in public and political life. There were more than 200,000 non-governmental organizations in the Russian Federation, half of which were voluntary associations and more than 10 per cent of which were religious organizations. The number of new NGOs continued to grow and women's organizations, in particular, represented nearly one third of all newly registered NGOs. In accordance with presidential decrees, the Government provided financial support to non-profit organizations, which was helping to promote the development of civil society.

14. As of 1 September 2015, 79 political parties had been registered in the Russian Federation, of which 10 were headed by women. More than 850 women were the heads of regional branches of various political parties. However, more needed to be done to increase women's representation in the legislature. For example, of the 450 deputies of the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, only 60 were women.

Women accounted for only some 14 per cent of officials elected to the representative bodies of the constituent entities (states) of the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, women made up 45 per cent of the officials elected to municipal bodies. Furthermore, women filled the post of Chairperson of the Federation Council, Deputy Prime Minister, Deputy Chairperson of the State Duma, Minister of Health and Governor in a number of provinces, to take just a few examples. Despite the shortfall in women in political office, Government attempts to introduce quotas to increase their numbers had not met with public approval. The Government was therefore exploring ways of developing the potential of women candidates and looked forward to receiving any recommendations that the Committee might have to help it to achieve that objective.

Articles 1 to 6

15. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said she wondered whether article 5.62 to the Code of Administrative Offences, which dealt with discrimination, covered indirect gender-based discrimination and the obligation of the State party to fulfil its obligations under the Convention. It was not clear whether the prohibition against discrimination under the article applied to non-State actors. She asked what impact the Federal Act on Free Legal Assistance, mentioned in paragraph 20 of the report, had on women's rights. In the light of the public opposition to the bill on gender equality, she would like to know whether the Government had taken any steps to raise awareness among those who had opposed it about the State party's obligations under the Convention with a view to getting the legislation passed. Regarding the status of NGOs, she would appreciate clarification on what constituted a foreign agent under Russian law, as there had been reports that the notion of "foreign agent" prevented a number of women's NGOs from operating, including participating in the process of reporting to the Committee or assisting in the implementation of its recommendations.

16. **Ms. Patten** said she commended the State party on its adoption of Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) on women, peace and security. She wished to know how the Russian Federation intended to translate into action the commitment it had made under the resolution to greater accountability and political will. She asked whether the Government had drafted a national plan of action to implement the resolution. She also wished to know what steps had been taken to ensure that women participated in decision-making in all matters involving peace, security and conflict resolution. It would be useful to know whether the Government was providing women with financial and technical assistance for that purpose, including training in mediation and advocacy.

17. She drew the delegation's attention to the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 (CEDAW/C/GC/30), in particular the obligation of States parties to apply the Convention to citizens and non-citizens within their territory or under their effective control, even if not situated within their territory. In that regard, she would appreciate it if the delegation would comment on the reports from a number of sources of serious violations of the Convention in the Donetsk Basin region in eastern Ukraine, over which the Russian Federation appeared to have considerable influence. The alleged violations perpetrated by the armed groups included rape and murder and the abduction of women from Ukraine and transfer to the Russian Federation for interrogation. She was also concerned about reports of repressive measures taken against Ukrainians by the Russian forces in the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, including the suppression of Ukrainian educational rights and the repression of journalists and women human rights defenders.

18. She would therefore like to know to what extent was the Government engaging with the armed groups to prevent human rights abuses, in particular sexual and

gender-based violence. She asked whether the Government would consider establishing an independent investigation into the allegations against the armed groups, as had been recommended by the Human Rights Council as far back as 2009 with regard to alleged violations by armed groups in South Ossetia. Lastly, she would like to know what steps the Government was taking to protect the internally displaced women and girls in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

19. **Ms. Zhirikova** (Russian Federation) said that the registration of non-governmental organizations identified as foreign agents had been necessary in order to ensure that the activities of such non-profit organizations which received funding from abroad were transparent. The registration did not involve State interference in the activities of the non-profit organizations acting as a foreign agent. A notification procedure had been established for the inclusion of such organizations in the register. The organizations faced no obstacles to seeking funding and other assets from Russian and foreign sources alike and using them for political activities, including on behalf of the foreign sources of funding. The regulations in question were based on a presumption of the lawfulness and good faith of the organizations concerned and did not deprive them of the right of judicial remedy against any unjustified requirements on the part of the judicial authorities and the Procurator's Office concerning their inclusion in the register. Furthermore, the burden of proof of the need to identify such organizations as foreign agents fell on the State bodies. Under the law, the involvement of NGOs in political activities in the Russian Federation was a determining factor for identifying and registering them as foreign agents. Non-governmental organizations engaged in cultural, scientific, health, educational, social and charitable activities were not liable to such registration as such activities were not political.

20. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that his Government would provide statistical data on the status of implementation of article 5.62 to the Code of Administrative Offences at a later date. It would also provide information in writing on the amount of assistance that had been provided under the Federal Act on Free Legal Assistance.

21. The Russian Federation regarded Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) as an important benchmark for the protection of women during armed conflict and the enhancement of their role in conflict prevention and settlement and post-conflict rehabilitation. However, national strategies and plans of action should first and foremost be developed, on a voluntary basis, by States engaged in an armed conflict or undergoing post-conflict reconstruction. Given that the Russian Federation was not currently involved in any such armed conflict, no such strategy had been developed.

22. As for the question raised concerning the situation in other States, in particular in certain parts of Ukraine, the Government could not interfere in the internal affairs of that State. However, given that the Russian Federation shared a border with Ukraine, it had been affected by events taking place in the country. Since 2014, the Russian Federation had taken in more than 1 million refugees, mainly women and children. They had been provided with all the necessary care and support, including access to education, health care and social assistance. As for the Republic of South Ossetia, the Government regarded the country as an independent State and it had been officially recognized by the Russian Federation. The foreign relations of the Russian Federation with those States were therefore governed by international law. He took issue with the assertions made in the reports referred to by Ms. Patten as they were unsubstantiated.

23. **The Chairperson** said she would appreciate further clarification of the steps being taken to implement the recommendation put forward by the Commissioner on

Human Rights of the Russian Federation in his 2014 report to the effect that a standard set of criteria for what constituted “political activities” should be applied.

24. **Ms. Patten** asked what measures were being taken to increase women’s representation in decision-making positions and involvement in peacebuilding activities. She said that more information was needed on the situation of women in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and invited the State party to comment on the application of the Committee’s general recommendation No. 28 on the core obligations of States parties under article 2 of the Convention.

25. **Ms. Lakhova** (Russian Federation) said that a number of laws had been passed during the period between the first and the second reading of the bill on gender equality which had necessitated taking new approaches to the draft legislation. The consequent public consultations on the bill had delayed the whole process.

26. Meanwhile, women’s organizations had worked closely with both houses of parliament to amend the Political Parties Act, including the introduction of a reference to constitutional provisions on equal rights and opportunities between men and women. Women had made considerable advances through political parties. As a multiparty system had been in place for only some 15 years, it was important for women to be actively involved in the work of the various parties. The Government had sought to introduce anti-discrimination provisions into the Family Code and the Labour Code as part of efforts to defend the rights of women. The President had been deeply involved in the development of civil society in the country and was working closely with the Council on Civil Society and Human Rights which reported to him. For example, in late September, the Women’s Union of Russia, over which she presided and which had a representative on the Council, had personally handed the President a draft legislative proposal on domestic violence at a meeting of the presidential Council. The proposal had been drawn up with the involvement of civil society and the Coordinating Council under the Ministry of Labour. The Government awarded grants to voluntary associations on a competitive basis to promote the development of civil society, including to women’s organizations and such well known human rights organizations as the Memorial Anti-Discrimination Centre. Nevertheless, there was much more to be done. For its part, the Women’s Union had provided leadership training and made efforts to increase legal literacy among women throughout the country.

27. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that Ms. Patten had used terms with respect to the Crimean peninsula that his delegation failed to understand. Women’s rights were fully protected in the Republic of Crimea and the City of Sebastopol, in accordance with the Convention. National laws fully applied to both constituent entities of the Russian Federation. Both had the authority to pass their own local legislation and had already adopted a range of laws and regulations which aimed at ensuring the rights of women and empowering them economically. Women in those entities were provided with appropriate education, health care and social protection. In fact, they received more benefits than a number of other constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

28. **Ms. Leinarte**, noting that the Russian Federation had thousands upon thousands of non-governmental organizations and that, not only in the Russian Federation but worldwide, many NGOs often could not survive without international assistance, said she failed to understand why, according to the report, only 52 were registered as so-called foreign agents.

29. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the designation of NGOs as foreign agents was not tantamount to a ban on their activities. It merely established the fact that the organization in question received funding from abroad. Unlike other

countries, very few non-governmental organizations in the Russian Federation were funded from abroad, as both federal and local governments provided them with grants. Therefore, they did not depend on foreign sources of funding.

30. **Ms. Zhirikova** (Russian Federation) said that non-governmental organizations received various forms of support from the authorities, including financial assistance, property, information, advice, training for staff and volunteers and tax incentives. Such support went towards the provision of legal assistance, educational support, scientific research, inter-ethnic cooperation, assistance to migrants, employment assistance and cultural activities.

31. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that new legislation on basic social services had been adopted in 2015, which would enable non-governmental organizations to provide social services alongside the State through competitive tendering for public sector contracts.

32. **Ms. Zou Xiaqiao** said she would appreciate more detailed information on the national machinery for the advancement of women, including the mandates, authority and resources of the three main institutions concerned with women's rights, namely the State Duma Committee on the Family, Women and Children, the Coordinating Council on Gender Issues and the special division of the Department of Demographic Policy and Social Protection under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. It was not clear which institution played the role of the national mechanism or was responsible for monitoring and implementing gender mainstreaming measures. Would the State party consider establishing a high-level mechanism, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 6 on effective national machinery and publicity? She asked why the State party had not drawn up a national plan of action for the advancement of women and suggested that the current focus on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provided an excellent opportunity for the Russian Federation to develop such a plan.

33. **Ms. Haidar** asked whether, given the current status of the bill on gender equality, the State party would be prepared to consider implementing temporary special measures in order to achieve substantive equality. She stressed that temporary special measures could include a wide range of activities, including outreach programmes, the reallocation of resources, targeted recruitment programmes and quota systems.

34. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection coordinated and monitored the work of the three government bodies. He agreed that there was a need to establish high-level State coordination and noted that an initiative had been launched to set up a commission at the governmental level, rather than ministerial level, on the implementation of the Convention, which would be headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. With regard to the national plan on gender equality and special temporary measures, although a wide range of measures had been implemented, there was no single policy paper to provide an overview or general strategy. His delegation would therefore consider the proposals made concerning a plan of action or strategy on women, as it had already done for the family, for children, for older persons and for others.

35. **Ms. Lahkova** (Russian Federation) said that the Government's gender policy was primarily aimed at ensuring that women were free to choose their own path in life. Accordingly, over the past two years, major public expenditures had been made in the construction of preschool establishments, thereby allowing more women the possibility of working outside the home. Another development was that the recently appointed Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation was a woman,

and she had requested her institution to develop mechanisms to protect and promote women's rights.

36. With regard to women's leadership, there had been a significant increase in the percentage of women who headed enterprises, especially small and medium-sized ones, or who served as chief financial officers. Women's organizations were actively involved in developing the programmes and gender policies of political parties, and women accounted for some 30 per cent of the members of the ruling party and 10 per cent of the members of its regional branches. Furthermore, there were women mayors in many municipalities throughout the Russian Federation, and women headed the parliaments of six of its constituent entities.

37. **Ms. Haidar** pointed out that temporary special measures were distinct from the normal efforts made by Governments to promote women's rights: they were, in fact, a form of affirmative action that was based on a government directive to the organizations concerned. For instance, a specific quota might be established for the participation of women on the boards of directors of major companies, and the companies would then be held accountable for meeting that quota. She urged the delegation to review the Committee's two general recommendations on temporary special measures, Nos. 5 and 25, and to consider such measures as a means of achieving positive results.

38. **Ms. Zou Xiaojiao** asked whether any timetable had been set for introducing a national plan of action for the advancement of women.

39. **Ms. Leinarte** said she wondered why much of the data provided in the State party report had not been broken down by gender and why disaggregated data did not seem to be available on the website of the Federal State Statistics Service.

40. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the Government was opposed to the use of quotas to ensure the participation of women in elected office, as its experience had shown such quotas to be ineffective and even, in some cases, to produce negative results. The national action plan on the advancement of women was expected to be completed by 2016 or 2017. The Government had experienced some difficulties with the updating and presentation of disaggregated statistical data on the situation of women. An annual workplan for statistics bodies, calling for changes in the collection of data, would be implemented — depending on the availability of budgetary resources — in either 2016 or 2017 in an effort to remedy the problem.

41. **Ms. Haidar** said that there were many ways of introducing temporary special measures without setting quotas, including government support to cover the expenses of higher education of young women from remote regions who were required to live away from home in order to pursue their studies. That said, many States parties in various parts of the world had successfully implemented quotas for the participation of women on company boards of directors, and the Committee would be happy to discuss those experiences, as well as other examples of best practice, with the delegation.

42. **Ms. Leinarte** said that, despite the fact that the State party had been urged to take steps during the reporting period to change or eliminate deep-seated and discriminatory stereotypes about women, patriarchal attitudes still persisted at all levels of society in the Russian Federation. She was concerned at the views expressed by a prominent Russian Orthodox priest, who had stated that "gender" was the conspiracy of Satanist Europe legitimizing paedophilia and bestiality. Emphasis on the role of women as mothers and caregivers hardly helped to advance women's equality in public and private life and could result in discrimination and violence against women. Referring to the more than 165,000 complaints of violence against women that had been registered in the State party in 2013, she requested a breakdown of the specific types of violence committed, including rape, and the number of cases

registered during the reporting period. She would appreciate it if the delegation could elaborate on the following: the status of adoption of the draft legislation on the prevention of domestic violence; the types of assistance provided to women victims of violence; the prosecution of cases involving harmful traditional practices, such as honour killings or bride kidnappings; the measures taken by the Government to prevent widespread polygamy and early marriage in the Chechen Republic; and the protection of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) women, given that national case law had not defined LGBT women as a social group.

43. **Ms. Haidar** asked whether the State party had a national plan to combat human trafficking and enquired as to which authority coordinated prevention efforts and how that authority was funded. She said she wished to know whether the Government had considered establishing a national procedure to guide law enforcement and other government officials, such as labour inspectors and health officials, in identifying and referring trafficking victims to service providers. She asked what funding was allocated to public institutions and relevant NGOs for the provision of specialized victim assistance and rehabilitation and would appreciate further details of efforts to investigate, prosecute and convict traffickers, including government officials involved in human trafficking activities.

44. **Ms. Leinarte** said that she would appreciate it if the delegation could comment on the reasons for the considerable number of complaints that had been lodged against women in 2014 for the offence of engagement in prostitution — amounting to more than 11,000 — and if it could explain why 44 per cent fewer complaints had been lodged for recruitment into prostitution in 2013 than in 2012. Those statistics, together with the lack of information in the State party's report on programmes to assist women who were seeking to escape prostitution, seemed to imply that the State party's approach was more punitive than preventive.

45. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the statements made by the Orthodox priest referred to by Ms. Leinarte were diametrically opposed to the values held by society in the Russian Federation, and the Government regarded them as the personal views of an individual who was entitled to express his opinion.

46. **Ms. Rodionova** (Russian Federation) said that the implementation of a wide variety of prevention measures by the Ministry of Internal Affairs had led to a noticeable reduction in the number of offences committed against women and an increase in the number of convictions handed down to perpetrators. Efforts were made to help women who were engaged in prostitution to extricate themselves from it and to find regular employment. Police officers were given training in detecting offences related to human trafficking and in working with the victims and were regularly kept abreast of recent developments in those areas.

47. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that, by and large, the establishments that provided assistance to women victims of violence were administered and funded at the level of the constituent entities. While the number of establishments providing such assistance was increasing, it was still insufficient and the Government recognized the importance of expanding the network of services for those victims.

48. Progress was being made towards the adoption of a law on domestic violence, which could conceivably take place before the end of 2015 at the autumn session of the legislature. The Government was currently examining the implementing legislation that were required for the law's enactment.

49. Although polygamy was prohibited by law in the Russian Federation, it was still practised in parts of the northern Caucasus region. The problem stemmed from the persistence of entrenched, but erroneous religious beliefs and people's reluctance to report instances of the practice to the authorities. Social, educational, administrative

and judicial measures were needed in order to stop the practice and to change traditional ideologies and attitudes. The Government recognized the need to make further progress in that area but feared that such an endeavour might be difficult and take some time.

50. **Ms. Kopteva** (Russian Federation) said that between 2012 and 2014, more than 9,000 human trafficking offences were registered, almost all of which (97.8 per cent) involved sexual exploitation of one kind or another. In 2014, the number of cases of rape had decreased by 2 per cent, from 4,085 to 4,008. Sexual assault cases decreased by 2.7 per cent. The number of domestic violence offences also dropped from 105,049 to 102,404, or by 2.5 per cent. The prevention of all acts of violence against women by the law enforcement agencies, including rape, sexual exploitation and trafficking in person, was a main priority of the Office of the Procurator-General.

51. **Ms. Rodionova** (Russian Federation) said that, in 2014, there had been 364,485 registered cases of violent crimes and 159,322 violent crimes against women. Of the 165,750 recognized female victims, 13,355 had been subjected to sexual violence. She wished to underscore that the conviction rate of perpetrators of violence against women had increased by 1.4 per cent, to 94.8 per cent.

52. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the delegation would provide the Committee with statistics, disaggregated by year, on the number of administrative proceedings instituted for offences related to prostitution. Although enticement to prostitution was an offence, domestic legislation did not contain a definition of prostitution as such, nor did it specify the legal responsibilities of women involved in prostitution. Given that prostitution was not a formally recognized profession, the Government could not adopt measures to protect the labour rights of those who engaged in it.

53. **Ms. Haidar** asked whether the State party intended to develop and fund a national action plan against trafficking in persons and to adopt a formal procedure to guide law enforcement and government officials in relation to trafficking cases.

54. **Ms. Leinarte** asked whether the Government would consider reviewing the provision in article 6.11 of the Code of Administrative Offences under which women engaged in prostitution were punishable by fines.

Articles 7 to 9

55. **Ms. Zou Xiaqiao** said that she wished to know what steps were being taken to ensure women's equal participation in decision-making in all areas of political and public life. The delegation should state whether there were any strategic measures to combat negative stereotypes and attitudes about women, campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of women's participation in decision-making and leadership training programmes aimed specifically at women.

56. Noting that women continued to be underrepresented in the main political parties, she urged the State party to consider adopting temporary special measures in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and with the Committee's general recommendation No. 25. Lastly, she would appreciate additional information on women's participation in academia and business, particularly at the decision-making level.

57. **Mr. Vovchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the Government had made progress in increasing the participation of women in political life and that the adoption of laws would be unlikely to increase the percentage of women in decision-making positions. Nevertheless, the Government acknowledged that more could be done and

would study the matter with a view to taking appropriate measures. In the labour market, meanwhile, women were well represented and active at all levels.

58. **Ms. Lakhova** (Russian Federation) said that the Federation Council and the Central Bank of Russia were headed by women. Moreover, there were women deputies in almost all government ministries and a number of women had been elected as governors of constituent entities of the Russian Federation. The fact that 60 per cent of the Russian electorate were women encouraged political parties to appoint women candidates, and women's organizations provided training in the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality. In 6 of the 85 constituent entities, including the City of Moscow, at least 30 per cent of the deputies in the parliaments of those entities were women. The Government was monitoring women's political representation in each entity and helping women's organizations to engage in dialogue with political parties and regional leaders.

59. **Ms. Zou Xiaojiao** said that, while it was true that Russian women were very active in public and political life, they generally remained underrepresented in decision-making positions, as exemplified by the State party's low ranking in the Inter-Parliamentary Union Women in Politics 2015 map. She held the State party to high standards and hoped that it would advance in many fields, including with regard to women's participation in political life.

60. **Ms. Leinarte** said she would appreciate information on women's participation in academic and diplomatic circles, where the glass ceiling tended to be low.

61. **Ms. Khvan** (Russian Federation) said that women accounted for more than 24 per cent of the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the capital having diplomatic rank. More than half of those women were in positions of leadership. Furthermore, women made up 16 per cent of the diplomatic staff of Russian missions abroad. In 2010, the figures had stood at 16 and 9 per cent, respectively. In recent years, there had been a stable increase in the number of women studying diplomacy at leading universities, which could be expected to have a positive impact on the number of women diplomats in the future.

Articles 10 to 14

62. **Ms. Trinchenco** (Russian Federation) said that 57 per cent of university professors were women.

63. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** pointed out the leading role that the Russian Federation had played in the adoption of Human Rights Council resolutions 16/3, entitled "Promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms through a better understanding of traditional values of humankind", and 26/11, entitled "Protection of the family", both of which failed to acknowledge that families existed in various forms and to refer to equality in the family. Furthermore, the Government's education policies made no mention of gender equality, mutual respect within the family, sex education or domestic violence. She therefore wondered whether the school curricula included courses on gender equality and age-appropriate sex education.

64. She also wondered whether any efforts had been made to screen textbooks and other educational materials with a view to eliminating gender stereotypes. She invited the delegation to comment on reports that lesbian, bisexual and transgender women were at greater risk of unfair dismissal from teaching positions and asked whether expressions of sexual orientation or gender identity could be considered grounds for dismissal under article 81, paragraph 8, of the Labour Code. She would appreciate information on any measures being taken to integrate Roma communities into society through the education system.

65. She said that she was surprised to hear that 57 per cent of professors were women. The delegation should clarify the figure, which seemed high, and indicate whether it related to tenured professors. She would also welcome information on the seniority of the academic posts held by women, the number of women rectors and any scholarships that were awarded as an incentive for women to pursue academic careers.

66. **Mr. Bruun** asked whether the labour legislation adopted by the State party since the consideration of its last periodic report in 2010 prohibited discrimination in hiring, promotion, employment conditions and dismissal, required equal pay for work of equal value and provided for effective enforcement procedures and remedies.

67. He urged the State party to abolish the list of 456 occupations from which certain categories of women were excluded and to ensure that any restrictions imposed were for maternity reasons only and did not hinder women's access to employment or exacerbate the gender pay gap. In that connection, he asked what was being done to bridge the pay gap and to combat horizontal and vertical gender segregation.

68. He invited the delegation to indicate whether the Government intended to include in its domestic legislation a comprehensive definition and clear prohibition of sexual harassment in the workplace. Lastly, he asked whether the Government had considered introducing non-transferable paternity leave.

69. **Ms. Nwankwo** asked what measures were being taken to improve the availability, accessibility and affordability of a wide range of modern contraceptive methods for all women, including rural women, and to improve access to accurate, evidence-based information on contraceptives and ensure that health-care providers shared such information with their patients. She also asked whether the cost of contraceptives was covered by public health insurance schemes.

70. She noted that, according to paragraph 193 of the periodic report, 24.5 per cent of women of childbearing age used modern forms of contraception in 2013. However, the 2011 national reproductive health survey mentioned in paragraph 14 of the replies to the list of issues had found that 81 per cent of women aged 15-44 had at one time or another used a modern form of contraception. She invited the delegation to explain the apparent discrepancy and to indicate whether measures were being taken to ensure that comprehensive, age-appropriate and rights- and evidence-based sex education was included as a mandatory subject in all school curricula and that teachers were trained accordingly. The delegation should also explain what was being done to prevent HIV infections, particularly those resulting from mother-to-child transmission.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.