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Summary record of the 3661st meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 22 October 2019, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Fathalla

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant
(continued)

Initial report of Cabo Verde (CCPR/C/CPV/1; CCPR/C/CPV/Q/1/Add.1 and CCPR/C/CPV/Q/1/Add.2)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Cabo Verde took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Ms. Santos Lélis** (Cabo Verde) said that she would highlight some of the key points covered in the State party's written replies to the Committee's list of issues. With regard to the status of the Covenant in the domestic legal system, because of the way in which statistical data were compiled, it was unfortunately not possible to provide the details of all court decisions in which the Covenant had been invoked. However, by way of example, the Covenant had been invoked by the Constitutional Court in decisions No. 7/2016, No. 31/2019, No. 27/2019 and No. 29/2019.
3. A proposed new statute for the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship had been drafted with a view to ensuring its compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), notably in terms of its independence and autonomy. The proposal was currently under review by the Government. Funding had already been set aside in the 2020 State budget for the implementation of the proposal.
4. The Ombudsman's Office was an independent State body responsible for defending and promoting the rights, freedoms, guarantees and legitimate interests of citizens in order to ensure, through informal means, the justice, legality and regularity of the exercise of public powers. All citizens were entitled to lodge complaints in respect of actions or omissions by the public authorities to the Ombudsman, who would consider them and make appropriate recommendations to the competent bodies to prevent and remedy illegalities or injustices. Since its establishment, the Ombudsman's Office had received a total of 1,025 complaints, the majority of which concerned reclassifications, promotions and career advancements, retirement pensions, retroactive payment and miscellaneous pay, and services such as water and electricity.
5. The Constitution prohibited discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, descent, language, origin, religion, social and economic conditions or political or ideological beliefs. Although the scope of that provision might be considered narrower than that required by international standards, it should be noted that the Constitutional Court had interpreted the prohibition of discrimination as unlimited. Other laws, such as Law No. 40/VIII/2013 and Law No. 84/VII/2011 afforded protection against discrimination for persons with disabilities and victims of domestic violence, respectively. Furthermore, article 161 of the Criminal Code prohibited discrimination on the grounds of origin, sex, family situation, state of health, habits and customs, political opinions, civic activity and real or supposed membership or non-membership of an ethnic group, nation, race or religion.
6. Decree-Law No. 38/2015 of 29 July, which established the procedures for recruitment to the civil service, set a 5 per cent quota for the employment of persons with disabilities. Companies that created jobs for persons with disabilities received tax benefits. The Ministry of Family and Social Inclusion awarded vocational training scholarships to persons with disabilities. Legislation on teleworking had recently entered into force and would facilitate access to work for persons with disabilities. The Strategic Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which included measures in the areas of accessibility, education, health, poverty reduction, employment and sport, culture and leisure, was in the final stages of drafting.
7. The National Gender Equality Plan (2015–2018) provided for gender mainstreaming in strategic and sectoral planning, with a view to achieving changes in behaviour and attitudes towards the roles of women and men in Cabo Verdean society. The Plan, which was in line with previous gender policy instruments, had provided public institutions, civil

society and partners with a coherent and systematic framework for activities in the field of gender equality and had mobilized funds from development partners.

8. Concerning the measures taken to eliminate harmful practices and stereotypes that discriminated against women, under the second Plan of Action on Immigration and Social Inclusion of Immigrants (2018–2020), a study was to be carried out on cultural practices and gender relations in immigrant communities. There were also plans to continue training sessions for male and female community and association leaders on promoting gender equality and human rights and combating gender-based violence, female genital mutilation and early marriage. In 2018, the General Directorate for Immigration had organized awareness-raising activities for immigrant women living on the islands of Santiago, Sal, Boa Vista, São Vicente and Santo Antão. The General Directorate was also developing measures to provide assistance and protection to at-risk immigrants.

9. A bill on gender parity had been presented to parliament and would be discussed later that month; its principal objectives were to prevent and combat discriminatory conduct and promote gender equality policies. Gender equality was included as one of the cross-cutting themes of the 2017–2021 Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development; gender equality was a prerequisite for achieving inclusive and sustainable development. The Interministerial Commission for Gender Mainstreaming had been established in 2018 with a mandate to propose public policies and report annually on the situation with respect to gender mainstreaming. Special attention was being paid to the economic empowerment of women; to that end, specific policies had been developed for the productive economy, using affirmative action to integrate businesswomen into the market and increase the employability of young women.

10. The Ministry of Health and Social Security was implementing measures to promote sexual and reproductive health rights from the perspective of diversity and the physical autonomy of women. Efforts had also been made in the area of men's sexual and reproductive health, and awareness of fathers' responsibilities was being raised.

11. The Ministry of Education had taken a number of important measures, including making access to preschool education universal, extending the period of mandatory basic education to eight years and making secondary education free as of 2020. Efforts were being made to achieve gender parity in managerial positions in the education system; as a result, 45 per cent of the country's decentralized education units ("delegations") were headed by women. Law No. 47/2017 prohibited discrimination against pregnant girls in the education system and provided for support measures to allow young parents to remain in school.

12. As a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since 1995, Cabo Verde had developed the National Climate Change Adaptation Action Programme, the National Strategy for Resilient and Low Carbon Development and the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction to protect people, their communities and their economies in the face of the damaging effects of climate change. Mitigation measures included actions on renewable energy, energy efficiency, transportation, forests, waste and sanitation.

13. When it came to the conduct of law enforcement officers, between 2010 and 2018, the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship had received 72 complaints of abuse of authority and police aggression, making up 14 per cent of the total complaints received. Thirteen such complaints had been received in 2019.

14. With regard to measures taken to combat prison overcrowding, the National Plan for Social Reintegration had been approved with a view to reducing rates of recidivism, and the capacity of the Fogo and Sal prisons was being increased. Steps were being taken to promote the use of alternatives to imprisonment, including through the approval of legislative provisions aimed at broadening the range of situations in which courts could impose such measures. Among the most recent innovations in that area were the introduction of house arrest, electronic monitoring and community service.

15. With regard to measures aimed at combating insecurity, a video surveillance system had been introduced in the main thoroughfares of the city of Praia and was to be extended

to the islands of Sal, São Vicente and Boa Vista. According to the most recent statistics from the Public Prosecution Service, a total of 193 homicides had been registered between 1 August 2018 and 31 July 2019, which corresponded to a 45 per cent decrease compared with the previous year. The Security and Citizenship Plan had been adopted in 2017 to combat juvenile delinquency. A bill had been presented on the chronological processing of cases, in order to reduce procedural delays in the justice system, and various legislative amendments had been made to improve the productivity and efficacy of the courts.

16. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that, ordinarily, the Committee recommended that States parties should ensure the equal participation of women in their delegations, but as the Cabo Verdean delegation was made up entirely of women that was not an issue. Although Cabo Verde had ratified the Covenant in 1993, it had not submitted its initial report until 2018, which meant that the Committee had had to conduct a review of the situation in the State party in the absence of a report in 2012. As the State party had submitted its replies to the list of issues (CCPR/C/CPV/Q/1/Add.2) only the day before, the Committee had had very little time to digest the information contained therein. He encouraged the State party to submit its reports in a timely manner in the future; that should be easier to do under the simplified reporting procedure, the aim of which was to ease the reporting burden on States parties.

17. The Committee welcomed the various achievements made in recent years but nonetheless had concerns in relation to the implementation of some Covenant provisions. He would be grateful if the delegation could confirm that international instruments prevailed over domestic legislation, but not the Constitution, and must be taken into account by the courts in interpreting domestic law. He appreciated the information provided by the head of delegation on the recent cases in which the Covenant had been invoked by the Constitutional Court. He would be interested to know the delegation's views on the reasons for the absence of individual communications submitted to the Committee in respect of Cabo Verde. Might that be attributable to a lack of awareness of the Optional Protocol among legal professionals?

18. He would like to hear about the processes for drafting the State party report and written replies to the list of issues and the entities that had been involved. He wondered which mechanisms would be responsible for monitoring follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations and any future Views on individual communications.

19. He would like the delegation to clarify the tasks carried out by the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship, how the Commission's mandate differed from that of the Ombudsman's Office and whether there was any overlap between the two. He would be interested to know how many complaints the National Commission had received in the previous three years, as most of the information received concerned the Ombudsman's Office. He would also appreciate information on any plans to strengthen the National Commission's presence throughout the country. He would welcome confirmation that the National Commission would be serving as the national preventive mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

20. Regarding crime prevention and control, he would appreciate more information on steps taken to combat insecurity, as well as on the current status of implementation of the Security and Citizenship Plan and other related plans and the results achieved thus far. He would like to know which entities were involved in crime prevention strategies and what specific measures were being taken to address the problem of youth gangs and juvenile delinquency. Lastly, the delegation might comment on allegations of shortcomings in police equipment and limited forensic capacity in the justice system.

21. **Mr. Muhumuza** said that he would like to know what progress had been made towards the adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that contained precise definitions of direct, indirect and multiple discrimination, that prohibited all forms of discrimination on all the grounds listed in the Covenant, and that provided for positive action to address substantive inequalities, as well as procedural safeguards to protect the rights enshrined in the Covenant. He wondered what measures had been taken to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in practice and to prevent

and combat violence based on sexual orientation. He would appreciate information on the number of cases of discrimination that had been reported and the outcomes of those cases, as requested in paragraph 3 of the list of issues (CCPR/C/CPV/Q/1/Add.1).

22. He asked what steps were being taken to ensure that the consultations on the draft national gender equality plan for 2019–2023 were broad and inclusive of victims of gender-based violence. He would like to know what efforts were being made to improve the availability and accessibility of shelters and support centres for all victims of domestic and gender-based violence, and to improve the provision of legal and psychosocial support services at those support centres through effective training for staff. Lastly, noting that the programmes in place to combat gender-based violence were largely funded by international partners, he asked how the State party would ensure the sustainability of those programmes in the absence of external assistance and whether media, justice, health and other relevant professionals were properly trained in matters relating to gender-based violence.

23. **Ms. Brands Kehris** said that she would appreciate more information on specific measures taken under the National Gender Equality Plan (2015–2018) and the impact of those measures. She would like to know whether the draft national gender equality plan for 2019–2023 contained specific targets and deadlines, and whether a budget for the implementation of that plan had been drawn up. She wondered what measures were being taken to address the deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes and gender stereotypes that were reportedly present throughout Cabo Verdean society, and how the impact of those measures would be evaluated.

24. With regard to the participation of women in political life, the civil service, the private sector and the judiciary, she would like to know whether the Government had set targets in that area, as well as deadlines for reaching those targets, and how progress in that regard was being monitored. It would be helpful if the delegation could comment further on the trends indicated by the data on that subject and provide more information on any special temporary measures that were planned or had been taken. She also wondered whether the State party had taken any gender equality measures that were aimed specifically at women in vulnerable situations, such as women living in poverty. She would like to know when the parity bill would be debated in the parliament, how soon it was likely to be adopted and how exactly it would ensure the effective promotion of gender equality.

25. In the light of reports that safe abortion services were not available throughout all nine inhabited islands, she would like to know whether an assessment of access to such services had been made and whether there were any plans to modernize the legislation on abortion, which dated back to 1987, in order to reduce women's recourse to unsafe abortions and their exposure to related health risks. It would be interesting to hear what progress had been made in compiling statistics on termination of pregnancy, including clandestine abortions. With regard to the training provided to ensure effective access of all women to sexual and reproductive health care, she would welcome more information on the budget allocated to that training and the number of people who had been trained.

26. Regarding the mobile teams for the provision of sexual and reproductive health care, she would like to know how many teams there were, whether the teams were permanent and how often they conducted visits to remote areas. She would appreciate information on any other measures taken to ensure timely and consistent access to sexual and reproductive health services for all women, especially those living in remote areas or in poverty, and for members of vulnerable groups, including sex workers and migrants. With respect to the spaces that had been created for adolescents in health centres, she wondered how many spaces of that kind had been created and whether such spaces were available throughout the country.

27. She would like to know whether the State party considered the prison service budget to be sufficient to address the challenges facing the prison service and what further measures were planned to reduce prison overcrowding. She would appreciate information on the implementation of the new legal provisions on the isolation of prisoners and the provision of training to prison staff on that subject. It would be useful to know whether prisoners were still placed in isolation and, if so, under what circumstances and for what length of time. In the light of reports that the provision of health services, including

psychiatric support, in prisons remained inadequate, she would like to know what measures had been taken to address that problem. Lastly, she would appreciate information on the outcome of the three complaints about prison officers that had been referred to the Public Prosecution Service, as well as the outcome of any other such complaints.

28. **Ms. Kran** said that she would like to know how the Government ensured the meaningful and informed participation of all sectors of the population in the development of policies and programmes, particularly those related to climate resilience. She asked how the State party intended to address the need for more inclusive and gender-sensitive climate policies that it had identified in paragraph 73 of its replies; whether measures to address that need would be incorporated into the 2017–2021 Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development; and how the State party ensured that the poorest and most vulnerable people had access to disaster response programmes.

29. She would appreciate updated information on the number of complaints of excessive use of force by law enforcement officers that had been received by the Public Prosecution Service and the Ombudsman, the proportion of complaints that had been investigated and the outcome of those investigations. She would like to know what measures had been taken to end the torture and ill-treatment of children by police officers; how many police officers had been prosecuted for such offences; what the outcomes of those cases had been; and whether the child victims in those cases had been provided with effective remedies. She would also like to know what steps would be taken to ensure that all members of the police force received training on human rights, that police conduct was in line with the Covenant and that independent monitoring of police stations was strengthened.

30. The Committee would be interested to hear whether the measures taken to reduce prison overcrowding had been effective; how many inmates, especially juvenile inmates, had benefited from the social reintegration measures taken in Fogo Island Regional Prison and the Military Prison since 2018; whether the data on social reintegration provided in the State party's replies covered the period from 2018 to the present; and whether the social reintegration services operated effectively. It would be helpful if the delegation could clarify the information provided in the State party's replies regarding the failure to separate juvenile and adult inmates in Fogo Island Regional Prison and explain what measures would be taken to ensure that juvenile and adult inmates were kept separate in all prisons throughout the country. Lastly, she wished to know what would be done to ensure that the Public Prosecution Service conducted regular visits to prisons as required by law; how the State party planned to address regional disparities in the frequency of those visits; and what additional measures had been taken to ensure that prison conditions were in line with article 10 of the Covenant.

31. **Mr. Furuya**, noting that the law stipulated that temporary custody might not exceed 36 months from the date of detention and that failure to observe the established deadlines at all stages of criminal proceedings would result in the release of the detainee, said that he would be like to know more about those deadlines and how they were monitored. He asked how many detainees had been released after reaching the maximum duration of temporary custody and what measures had been taken or were planned to improve the situation.

32. The Committee had been informed that some islands did not have prisons and that detainees were housed in police stations while awaiting transfer to the central prison or to the regional prisons. Given that, in such cases, accused persons were likely to be kept in the facility that was also being used by the investigating authorities, he wondered what steps had been taken to mitigate the risk of detainees being forced to make confessions of guilt.

33. Finally, noting that the Bar Association of Cabo Verde had offices on two of the nine inhabited islands, he asked how many lawyers were practising in the country and what was the ratio of lawyers to the population as a whole. How did the State party guarantee the right to contact a lawyer in a timely manner, and how did it effectively manage the provision of free legal aid in criminal proceedings?

The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

34. **Ms. Santos Lélis** (Cabo Verde) said that for a long time Cabo Verde had failed to meet its obligation to submit reports on the implementation of the treaties it had signed. The

current administration, which had assumed office in 2016, recognized that fact and aimed to report more frequently to the human rights treaty bodies. Another problem was that the Government did not have access to the required level of statistical information owing to the limited capacity of the Cabo Verdean public sector. For example, the Government was able to confirm that human rights treaties were cited and implemented by the courts, but it was unable to determine the number of such cases. To help rectify that situation and to improve the quality of its reporting, the Government was building a database containing case law of the Supreme Court of Justice. Furthermore, an interministerial commission responsible for the preparation of human rights reports, composed of representatives of various governmental bodies, had recently been established under the Prime Minister's Office.

35. The National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship predated the Ombudsman's Office; its statute was in the process of being amended with a view to meeting the country's need for a national human rights institution. The National Commission had been functioning since 2004, whereas the Ombudsman's Office had been established in 2015. Given that the Ombudsman's Office was mentioned in the Constitution and that its role was to guarantee constitutionally enshrined rights, freedoms and safeguards, its powers were more extensive than those of the National Commission. The Government did not plan to strengthen the National Commission's presence in other islands, considering that it had a responsibility to treat all islands equally and that current budgetary constraints did not permit the replication of national-level institutions. The National Commission was in no way diminished by not having a presence on all the islands, since it had designated focal points in all municipal councils, who were responsible for coordinating its policies and achieving the best possible outcomes for human rights protection.

36. In 2018, a prison census had been conducted in Cabo Verde for the first time, leading to the adoption of the National Plan for Social Reintegration, which aimed to prevent reoffending, particularly among young people. Other important policy measures to combat juvenile delinquency included the National Care Plan, which focused on persons with low incomes, and the provision of an "inclusion income", intended to allow people to make better life choices and increase their employability. Community associations also did important work; the Security and Citizenship Plan emphasized the importance of a close connection between those associations and their communities for strengthening civic action and combating antisocial behaviour and juvenile delinquency. Furthermore, the gradual abolition of school fees would favour increased school attendance, so that children and young people had less time to engage in activities that might bring them into conflict with the law.

37. Efforts were under way in the framework of Act No. 84/VII/2011 on gender-based violence. For example, a judge specializing in that issue sat in the Praia district court, while the Superior Council of the Judiciary reported the number of cases of gender-based violence that had been resolved. Short-stay centres, providing temporary shelter for persons deemed to be at greatest risk, were operational on the islands of Fogo, Sal and São Vicente. The Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality and Equity provided training for judges, journalists and health professionals on how to address gender-based violence.

38. In terms of women's representation in politics, a decrease had been observed in their presence in the executive branch, in which they had formerly held the majority of ministerial portfolios. However, it was important to recall that women had been appointed to those offices under the previous administration and had not been directly elected. It was expected that the parity bill would be discussed and adopted during the forthcoming session of the National Assembly.

39. As the report indicated, access to abortion in Cabo Verde was limited both by the fact that the country was an archipelago and by the budget situation. The Government estimated that about 1,200 abortions had been performed in health centres in 2019 to date, according to statistics maintained by the centres themselves. The Ministry of Health worked with the Cabo Verdean Association for Family Protection (VERDEFAM), which compiled statistics on clandestine abortions. Mobile health teams providing sexual and reproductive health-care services either attended "health fairs" promoted by the Ministry of Health or were managed by VERDEFAM, which had specially equipped vehicles in which

the teams travelled to remote areas. In addition, VERDEFAM provided sexual and reproductive health-care services at its permanent facility, and they were also available in the public health system.

40. The Government was aware of the concerns that had been raised in relation to prison conditions, but it was unclear when it would have the necessary resources to address them. All State sectors were subject to budget limitations and were obliged to choose between competing priorities in responding to the needs of the population. Those limitations would only be overcome with strong economic growth, which would generate the tax receipts needed for implementation of the desired public policies. Nevertheless, the Government had made a significant investment in the Sal regional prison, where work had been carried out on the construction of a wall and on increasing capacity, while expansion work had also been undertaken at the Fogo regional prison, so that it might receive detainees from Fogo and Brava and thereby relieve the overcrowding at Praia Central Prison.

41. The Government had launched a recruitment process to meet the need for psychologists and social workers in the prison service, although unfortunately the completion of that process was still pending. The Public Prosecution Service was the competent body tasked with investigating complaints made by inmates against prison officers; it would act appropriately and confidentially, with a view to due punishment of any wrongful actions or practices.

42. In addition to the programmes and strategies that the Government had adopted to protect communities against the harmful effects of climate change, Cabo Verde had prepared its intended nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement, establishing ambitious targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Government considered that the green economy and the blue economy were economic models that should be developed, and projects in that context were being implemented, focusing on the agriculture and fisheries sectors and with the participation of the local population.

43. Details concerning cases of the excessive use of force by law enforcement officers were provided in the replies to the list of issues. New police officers received initial training before being assigned to their units, which included training on human rights and on protecting the public. The Government acknowledged that some incidents had occurred and had clearly signalled that abuses would not be tolerated and that those responsible would be held accountable.

44. It was not possible to provide greater detail on the social reintegration plans for convicted inmates because those plans were not developed in a systematic manner, making it difficult to evaluate their outcomes. However, the National Plan for Social Reintegration had recently been adopted, together with a budget for its implementation in 2020. Under the Plan, it was envisaged that prisoners would prepare individual development plans and would increasingly participate in initiatives geared towards employability and social reintegration as they neared release. Prisoners in Praia, for example, participated in a project in which they were trained in the painting of house exteriors.

45. The Government was aware that steps needed to be taken if it was to comply with its international obligations related to the separation of detained juveniles and adults. Unfortunately, the number of young people in detention meant that separation could not always be guaranteed, as doing so would aggravate the overcrowding of adult detainees. The Government intended to resolve the issue as soon as possible by making the necessary investments in prison facilities. The replies to the list of issues contained the information that the Committee had requested on the duration of temporary custody and the number of inmates in each prison. However, the information on the number of detainees who had been released upon reaching the maximum duration of temporary custody was not available, as it had not been provided by the competent body.

46. The Bar Association of Cabo Verde had offices on only two islands, but it represented lawyers practising throughout the country. The Bar Association provided legal aid in accordance with the published regulations, and it prepared rosters of duty lawyers whom the courts called upon to provide the service. In the previous two years, the State had doubled the amount of funding it allocated for legal aid, with the result that much more

assistance was now being provided. It had also recently launched a platform to gather statistics on the type of legal aid provided and the number and gender of the beneficiaries, among other indicators. An attempt was being made to improve the organization of the legal aid system, so that beneficiaries would be assisted by the same lawyer throughout proceedings.

47. **Ms. Kran** said that it would be useful to have more detailed information on how the participation of all relevant populations in discussions related to sustainable development and climate change was ensured in practice. It would also be interesting to have further information on how the State party integrated gender-related aspects into its plans in those areas.

48. With regard to the conduct of law enforcement officers, she wished to know exactly how many complaints of violence by police officers had been registered by the State party, whether any of those complaints had been investigated and, if so, what the outcomes had been. It would be useful to have further information regarding the treatment of children by the police and to know whether the State party had taken steps to strengthen the independent monitoring of police stations by, for example, human rights organizations or the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship. She wished to know how the State party measured the effectiveness of its reintegration services and its efforts to reduce prison overcrowding. Lastly, she would be grateful for further information on the State party's time frame for complying with international standards on the separation of young and adult offenders.

49. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that he would be grateful for further information on the composition of the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship and the election of members, including details of eligibility criteria. He was particularly interested to know whether it was true that there were plans to appoint a representative of the Ministry of Justice as a member of the National Commission. He wished to know what bodies were responsible for the prevention of crime in Cabo Verde and what role the Security and Citizenship Plan played in that regard. Lastly, as he had noted earlier, it would also be useful to receive further information on the limited availability of police equipment and the limited capacity for forensic investigation within the criminal justice system.

50. **Ms. Sancin** said that she wished to know whether foreign nationals and migrants without residence permits could submit complaints to the Ombudsman.

51. **Ms. Brands Kehris** said that she would appreciate further information on how the parity bill would be implemented if adopted. She would also appreciate clarification regarding the designation and election of women to political positions. It would be useful to know exactly how many of the total number of abortions registered by the State party were clandestine and what measures it planned to take to eradicate clandestine abortions. She would be grateful for more specific information on the role of the Government in the operation and funding of mobile health-care teams. How regularly were such teams sent out?

52. With regard to the treatment of persons deprived of liberty, she would appreciate further information regarding the outcomes of the three complaints submitted by prisoners against prison officers mentioned in paragraph 120 of the State party's report. She would be grateful for further information on specific measures taken under the National Gender Equality Plan (2015–2018) and their impact, as well as information on any evaluations that the State party had conducted in that regard with a view to preparing more effective policy in the future. More information on the funding set aside for the Plan would also be welcome.

53. **Mr. Bulkan** said that he wished to know whether HIV infection was considered a disability under national law. If not, he would like to know whether the State party had considered amending the law specifically to prohibit discrimination against people living with HIV. It would also be useful to know whether there were any plans or policies in place to address the stigmatization of people living with HIV.

54. **Mr. Muhumuza** said that he would be grateful for further information on the measures that the State party planned to take to ensure predictable and sustainable Government funding for shelters for victims of gender-based violence.

55. **Mr. Quezada Cabrera** said that he wished to know whether the offence of torture was bound by a statute of limitations. If so, what was the applicable time limit and had the State party considered making the offence imprescriptible? It would also be useful to know whether national law provided for the possibility of classifying torture as a crime against humanity in special circumstances.

56. **Mr. Koita** said that he was interested to know why no representatives of the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship, and so few representatives of civil society, had travelled to Geneva for the State party's review by the Committee. He would also be grateful for the delegation's comments on the state of civil society in Cabo Verde.

57. **Ms. Santos Lélis** (Cabo Verde) said that the State party was yet to evaluate the social reintegration measures it had taken, since they had so far been implemented on an ad hoc basis. A new plan for the implementation of social reintegration measures had recently been launched, the results of which would be available for evaluation in the near future. The draft of the new statute of the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship was still being discussed. She was therefore not able to confirm any details regarding its content.

58. The bodies responsible for the prevention of crime in Cabo Verde were the National Police and the Judicial Police, which operated under the direction of the Public Prosecution Service. Significant budgetary measures had been taken to ensure that the police were properly equipped, and steps had been taken to increase the capacity of the laboratories used by the Judicial Police. DNA tests had recently been carried out as part of an ongoing investigation for the first time. In addition, significant efforts were being invested in the improvement of information technology infrastructure, such as fingerprint registers.

59. The Ombudsman had a mandate to receive complaints from foreign nationals. With regard to the representation of women in politics, in some situations, women stood for election, while in others they could be directly appointed. She was unable to provide information on the outcome of the three complaints submitted by prisoners against prison officers because it was currently impossible to disaggregate statistical data on case files in such a way as to extract that information.

60. Although the level of commitment to civil society in Cabo Verde could be higher, civil society organizations played a significant role in human rights-related issues. For example, a number of civil society representatives were members of the National Commission for Human Rights and Citizenship. The offence of torture was bound by a statute of limitations.

61. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that he would like to know whether there were plans to reorganize the court system to bring courts closer to their end users. He would be grateful if the State party could provide further information on the chronological processing of cases in the judicial system. He was particularly interested to hear how the new system was perceived by judges, prosecutors and judicial officials. He wished to know more about the measures that the State party had taken to ensure the independence of the judiciary and the Public Prosecution Service. In that regard, it would be interesting to know whether the Minister of Justice had the power to instruct prosecutors to act or to refrain from acting in specific cases. It would also be useful to know what measures the State party had taken to address corruption within the judiciary and the Public Prosecution Service. Information on any cases of corruption identified and their outcomes would be welcome. Lastly, he was interested to know whether there were plans to increase the number of judges and prosecutors.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.