



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Summary record of the 2791st meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 8 May 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Skelton

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

Consideration of reports of States parties (continued)

Seventh periodic report of Guatemala (continued) ([CRC/C/GTM/7](#);
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1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Guatemala joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair** invited the delegation of Guatemala to continue replying to questions put by Committee members at the previous meeting.
3. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, with the aim of supporting the comprehensive development of children, a bill to establish care centres and services had been added to the legislative agenda. In the area of health, an immunization bill was currently before Congress. Its objective was to establish a legal framework to promote and facilitate access to vaccines for all Guatemalans, including children and other vulnerable groups, and to prevent the spread of infectious disease. The current legislature was also studying a bill on a healthy diet, the aim of which would be to reduce disability, morbidity and premature deaths linked to chronic non-communicable diseases. The bill was supported by various groups in Congress and was likely to be approved shortly.
4. Specific legislative efforts were being made to support persons with disabilities, including the recent approval of an Act establishing a biopsychosocial disability certification system. The Act, which was already being implemented, enabled all persons with disabilities, including children and adolescents, to obtain the certification they needed to access State programmes that sought to promote their comprehensive development. A bill to promote the Braille writing system was due to be considered by Congress.
5. The legislature had recently passed a decree reforming the Act on the Alba-Keneth Alert System, with a view to facilitating the search for missing children by providing for the immediate dissemination of Alba-Keneth alerts by mobile network providers and through social media and other platforms. A bill on the prevention and punishment of trafficking in adolescents in the prison system had recently been brought before Congress. It would seek to tackle violations of their fundamental rights and ensure that their best interests were safeguarded within the facilities in which they were serving their sentence.
6. Other proposed initiatives on the legislative agenda included bills that would seek to prevent and address sexual and street harassment and to raise awareness of, punish and eradicate online sexual violence. Another bill concerned the provision of justice for survivors of sexual violence; its purpose would be to prevent suspected perpetrators of such violence from benefiting from alternatives to detention in cases in which there were specific aggravating circumstances, such as when the victim was under 14.
7. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the case of the Virgen de la Asunción children's home was currently being heard in a public trial, after which a final judgment would be issued. The parties in the case comprised 12 defendants, in addition to a number of third parties who were defendants, plaintiffs and victims. All the parties were represented by one or several lawyers. Throughout the proceedings, the judiciary had been committed to ensuring that the incident was investigated, that due process was followed in the trial and that the individuals responsible would be punished. While the judiciary was conscious that it was impossible to make full amends for the tragedy, it had sought to provide guarantees of non-repetition, including measures to promote deinstitutionalization, and reparations for victims. Victims were entitled to request protective measures and receive lifetime pensions. Steps had been taken to guarantee their right to health and offer them emotional support.
8. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the judiciary's work was guided by the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Accordingly, all judicial bodies and administrative offices were required to apply a policy that prohibited any kind of discrimination against children and adolescents, including on the grounds of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, family background or national, ethnic or social origin. The judiciary was aware, however, that some children and adolescents faced obstacles to the enjoyment of their right to equal access to justice. It thus promoted an inclusive approach in all its offices and prioritized action that would reduce the risk of those children and

adolescents falling victim to rights violations. Special attention was paid to children who had been orphaned or were housed with their mothers in places of deprivation of liberty.

9. The judiciary was committed to guaranteeing access to justice for all persons with disabilities and had formulated a policy to that end. Steps were being taken to ensure that judicial facilities were accessible for such persons and offered alternative communication devices and services, including sign language interpreters. In 2021, 43 individuals had received sign language training, bringing the total number of individuals who had participated in such training to almost 200. The judiciary's work in the area was supported by the Committee for the Blind and the Deaf. Awareness-raising activities and training in working with persons with disabilities, including children and adolescents, were delivered to judges, magistrates and administrative staff by the School of Judicial Studies.

10. Support was provided to victims of all forms of gender-based and sexual violence. From 2020 to 2024, the judiciary's Secretariat for Women and Gender Analysis had delivered training on gender to 1,336 women and 671 men. Moreover, between 50 and 55 per cent of the judiciary's administrative staff were women. A policy was in place to provide access to justice for Indigenous Peoples, recognizing their ethnic and cultural identity and diversity. The judiciary had run a number of training sessions on that topic, and its Indigenous Peoples Secretariat was able to provide interpretation in 22 Mayan languages.

11. Regulations were in place to ensure that children and adolescents who had been removed from their families would benefit from protective measures. In such cases, the judiciary worked together with the competent institutions to restore those children's rights. With regard to child asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants, the judiciary's work was guided by the need to protect those children's fundamental rights. It ran migration-related training and awareness-raising programmes for judges; it had adopted a policy aimed at preventing the institutionalization of migrants; and it cooperated with various national and international agencies working on migration. In cases involving unaccompanied child migrants, the judiciary worked with the Office of the Human Rights Advocate and other State institutions to protect such children. The judiciary had handled 132 cases involving the economic exploitation of children or child labour and was taking steps to tackle such crimes.

12. A total of 25 juvenile justice courts had been established to handle cases involving children and adolescents in conflict with the law. Such cases could also be heard by two courts for the enforcement of measures and one court of first instance, which operated 24 hours a day to ensure that adolescents in conflict with the law were heard within a reasonable time frame. One of the main developments in the juvenile criminal justice sector had been the piloting of electronic case files. The judiciary had adopted a comprehensive support model for juvenile criminal justice and established various technical committees to work in that area.

13. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Government was working to ensure that children and adolescents with disabilities and special educational needs had access to education without discrimination. That access was currently limited because of a number of challenges, including a lack of human and financial resources, low levels of empowerment among persons with disabilities, the lack of political and societal interest in disability issues, the prevalence of the medical model of disability, and the fact that strategies for teaching students with disabilities did not form part of the teaching training curriculum.

14. The Government had opened both special education schools and inclusive schools that recruited special education teachers. Teachers working in inclusive schools gave talks to their own students and to those in regular schools to inform them of the rights of students with disabilities. Inclusive education resource centres had been set up; staff from those centres carried out home visits and ran community awareness-raising campaigns, in order to ensure that families of students with disabilities were aware of the services available to them. Those staff also organized awareness-raising activities for the general public and for educators. Events were held to celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Children and adolescents with disabilities were able to participate in student-led school councils. Other action taken included the delivery of teacher training on disability issues, the development of relevant curriculum guidelines and the creation of bursaries for persons with disabilities.

15. The Government was aware of the key role played by sexual and reproductive health education in addressing teenage pregnancy. Such education was delivered in an age-appropriate way at all levels of schooling, and efforts were made to strike a balance between respecting local traditions and adhering to scientific standards and international agreements. The Government followed an evidence-based approach in its efforts to reduce rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection, and it was conscious that it needed to step up those efforts in order to fulfil its obligations under the Convention. Challenges in the area included resistance from certain conservative groups, the need to strengthen coordination among relevant institutions, and the fact that sexual and reproductive health was not consistently covered in teacher training programmes. A road map had been drawn up to improve teachers' knowledge of the matter, and the Ministry of Education was working with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and other bodies to further strengthen that knowledge, develop educational materials and run awareness-raising campaigns. The Strategy for the Comprehensive Protection of Children and Young People would be implemented for the first time in 2024; it was hoped that the Strategy would contribute to reducing teenage pregnancy and combating the spread of sexually transmitted infections by facilitating action in areas such as the prevention of violence, gender equality and sex education.

16. The current budget earmarked for education was just over 22 million quetzales. While that budget had increased in recent years, its share of gross domestic product (GDP), which stood at 2.6 per cent in 2024, had remained static. More than 90 per cent of that budget was used to pay salaries; the rest was earmarked for capacity-building and the development of educational material and innovative tools. The Government was working to ensure that more resources were allocated to early childhood, pre-primary and secondary education, which had historically been underfunded. It was hoped that a greater share of GDP would be allocated to the education sector in 2025.

17. Bilingual and intercultural education was offered to combat racism and discrimination and to respond to the needs of a multicultural and multilingual society, in which almost half of all people identified themselves as Indigenous. Educational material and curricula were tailored to the cultural and linguistic needs of the country's Indigenous populations. A sociolinguistic study of 4,400 schools had been conducted in 2023, and digital applications would be developed to facilitate learning of the various national languages, as part of the current Administration's strategy of bilingual education reform.

18. In order to bridge the digital divide and improve the computer skills of children and young people, especially in rural areas, computer equipment had been provided to schools throughout the country, teacher training courses had been developed, and courses, workshops, textbooks and exercises were being created. Students aged between 13 and 16 would receive tablets and computers as part of a new education model to incorporate information and communications technology into the classroom. The Ministry of Education was working with other ministries, including the Ministry of Communications, Infrastructure and Housing, to connect the entire national education system to the Internet, and a repository of digital educational materials, including books and guides, would be launched by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with other national and international entities.

19. Human rights were taught as part of the social sciences and citizenship education subjects at primary and secondary levels, and the relevant educational material had been made available. In 2017, the National Strategy for Citizen Education had been established to provide rights education to students and create spaces for reflection, analysis, dialogue, discussion and action. Teachers received human rights training as part of their initial and in-service training courses.

20. *Acompáñame a Crecer* (Help Me Grow), one of the Ministry of Education's flagship programmes, was aimed at promoting the early development of children from conception until they reached the age of 4. It covered areas such as early learning, health, hygiene, nutrition and food safety, and approximately 62,000 children and their families had benefited. Efforts were under way to extend coverage and improve the quality of the assistance provided.

21. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Government was currently developing a comprehensive and inclusive health-care model that was affordable and that catered to families and communities as well as individuals. Given the cultural diversity of the country, the services must be culturally relevant. A dozen hospitals were being refurbished, using government funding and with the support of United Nations entities and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, to ensure that they met the needs of persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Act on the Provision of Services for Persons with Disabilities. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare had appointed focal points in the National Council to coordinate action to support children with disabilities. Under the new health-care model, the integration of children with disabilities into family, cultural and school life was a key aim of the early detection, preventive care and treatment processes. The Government was working on implementing a certification system to guide policies and programmes to improve the quality of care for children with disabilities and their families, with a particular focus on identifying disabilities in the early years of the child's life. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare had deployed mobile health-care and nutrition units to provide advice and assistance to children and their families, communities and community leaders in rural areas.

22. The Ministry carried out community vaccination programmes, and strategies such as "Health on Wheels" had been launched to ensure that vaccines were accessible to children in all communities. In 2023, 5 million doses of vaccines had been administered to children up to 4 years of age. In addition, around 1.8 million doses of the human papillomavirus vaccine had been administered to girls since the vaccination programme had been launched, and the programme had been extended to include boys from 2024. The immunization bill, which was in its third reading in Congress, was intended to provide the necessary financing for vaccines using revolving funds, to allow direct procurement from suppliers and to ensure inter-institutional coordination between the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other health agencies to boost vaccination coverage. The purpose of the bill was also to ensure that the country had a solid immunization programme and to improve the registration of information on vaccines administered at the national level.

23. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare had held meetings with the Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security and the Ministry of Social Development to devise a strategy to reduce poverty and malnutrition. As part of efforts to promote breastfeeding, many hospitals and other health services had been certified as breastfeeding-friendly; midwives played an essential role in that regard. Vitamin A supplements were provided to children between 6 months and 1 year of age, and fortified foods were supplied to children between 6 months and 5 years of age who suffered from acute malnutrition. Pregnant women and women who had recently given birth were given iron and folic acid supplements. The strategy had been implemented in more than a hundred priority municipalities, both in health centres and within the community. The Government was taking an intersectoral approach to addressing the structural causes of poverty, which often gave rise to malnutrition.

24. A bill to promote a healthy diet, which had been presented to Congress in 2018 and was currently in its third reading, would regulate advertising aimed at children and require warnings on the labels of certain food and drinks. A national strategy had been developed to prevent obesity among children, and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare had devised protocols for the treatment of children with obesity.

25. Children from 10 years of age were given comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education in adolescent-friendly spaces around the country. Funding had been increased over the previous five years as part of a strategy to enhance those spaces. Educational material on sexual and reproductive health had been prepared, Ministry staff had received training on the topic and information and awareness-raising campaigns had been carried out.

26. While the legislation prohibited abortion, post-abortion care was available. In 2023, some 1,600 girls had benefited from such services. Sexual and reproductive health policy included the adoption of a national plan to prevent adolescent pregnancy for the period up until 2032, which had been drawn up with the assistance of international organizations and civil society. The rate of teenage pregnancy had declined significantly in recent years.

27. The Government was implementing a specific plan to provide training for health professionals in methods for treating the use of psychotropic substances by young people. A periodic climate change risk assessment, with a focus on its effects on health, had been carried out most recently in 2022 and had identified numerous threats linked to climate change, including air pollution resulting from forest fires.

28. **Ms. Marshall-Harris** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that she would like to find out whether the Government involved NGOs in the development and monitoring of its strategies, action plans and programmes and the implementation of its policies related to children's rights. Noting that the Office of the Ombudsman had a shortfall in funding and limited resources and authority, she wished to know whether the Government had considered granting it greater protection and resources. Did the Government, working with civil society actors, carry out any awareness-raising campaigns to ensure that the Convention would be widely known and to encourage sensitivity to children's rights, for example among parents, the media, law enforcement, social workers and teachers?

29. The Committee would be interested to find out whether the Government had put in place regulations to ensure that businesses complied with international human rights standards in respect of labour rights and environmental protection, especially as they pertained to the situation of children. Specifically, it would like to find out whether companies were required to undertake child rights impact assessments and to publicly disclose environmental and health-related aspects of their projects, and whether such projects, especially those affecting children from Indigenous groups, were subject to scrutiny or oversight.

30. **Ms. Zara** (Country Task Force) said that the Committee would like to find out about strategies and programmes aimed at improving access to basic services such as water and sanitation in underserved urban and rural areas and at promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities in the education system.

31. **Mr. Van Keirsbilck** (Country Task Force) said that he wished to find out whether children benefited free of charge from legal aid from specialized lawyers and whether they had access to complaint mechanisms, both judicial and non-judicial. The delegation was invited to describe in greater detail the use of video equipment during hearings involving child victims of crime. The Committee would like to hear whether corporal punishment was prohibited in schools, and if so, how discipline was enforced; whether children's homes such as the Hogar Seguro Virgen de la Asunción were public or private institutions; and whether the children who lived in them were free to leave. Noting that Guatemala had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, he asked whether a national preventive mechanism had been established in accordance with that instrument and whether it was effectively operational for children deprived of their liberty. He would appreciate it if the delegation could indicate whether schooling was free of charge and could inform the Committee of the enrolment rate and of the age limit for compulsory education.

32. **Ms. Correa** said that the Inter-American Court of Human Rights had recently found that Guatemala had violated the land ownership rights of Indigenous Peoples and had called for the State to grant an Indigenous community a land title and consult it about a mining project. There had reportedly been a long history of the State criminalizing members of Indigenous Peoples, including minors, who put forward land claims or demonstrated against mining interests. The Committee would like to know what strategies the new Government would adopt and what steps it was considering to remedy that situation, including efforts to prevent foreign interests and criminal gangs from blocking the implementation of the findings of international human rights courts. Did the Government receive any support to that end from the international community?

33. **Ms. Aho**, noting that the Committee had received reports that some 40 per cent of births took place outside a health facility, said that she would like to know how such births were registered, given that only about a third of midwives were qualified to register births. The Committee would appreciate it if the delegation could specify whether specific statistics were kept of the number of children with disabilities and whether the public was generally

aware that vaccinations were provided free of charge. What was the vaccination coverage rate in Guatemala?

34. **Ms. Beloff** said that she would like to know the delegation's view on the decisions and guidance issued by international human rights bodies and their lack of practical impact on the daily life of children in the country. She would appreciate it if the delegation could comment on the raising of the minimum age of consent for sexual relations from 14 to 16 years. Did the Government perceive a link between corruption, on the one hand, and poverty and human rights violations, on the other? Guatemala had a more than ample legal framework for the monitoring of compliance with international human rights conventions and the Constitution; the delegation should perhaps comment on its lack of practical effect.

35. **Ms. Todorova** said that article 5 of the Convention referred to the evolving capacities of children and stated that parents must take them into consideration when providing guidance and exercising their rights. A public policy adopted in 2021 had indicated that the sexual education of children must be respectful of the morals of the family, with prior authorization of the parents. Such a policy was apparently at variance with article 5. How did the new Government relate to that policy statement? She understood that abortion was prohibited and, in that light, she would welcome further information on the post-abortion services available in the country.

36. **The Chair** said that she would like to know if the Government had thought about the implications of an increase in the age of sexual consent for adolescents who were both consenting.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at noon.

37. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Social Welfare Secretariat handled the cases of some 500 children with disabilities by providing them with education and training on an outpatient basis and of about 150 children who were in residential care. Both forms of support were oriented towards the children's social inclusion and reintegration in daily life. In the first three months of 2024, the Secretariat had also provided food and social support for some 4,000 Guatemalan migrant children who had returned to the country. Staff at shelters for returning children assisted in finding their families and arranging reunification. While the previous Government had conducted a policy whereby irregular migration was not supported, the current Government considered that migration was a right, and it was for the State to guarantee the safety of persons transiting through the country, regardless of their legal status. A plan had accordingly been devised by a number of government bodies to ensure humanitarian assistance for migrant children in transit.

38. Military service in Guatemala began at the age of 18, but young people could opt to perform civic service. The Secretariat currently had 177 young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who were preparing to serve in social welfare directorates and programmes.

39. The Government had signed partnership agreements with grass-roots, civil society and international organizations in order to obtain technical assistance and share human and material resources, for example in the context of campaigns for the prevention of ill-treatment, teenage pregnancy and sexual violence. The 14 children's homes known as *hogares seguros* were public institutions that were subject to oversight by the national preventive mechanism and monitoring by the National Adoption Council and other bodies. Residents of the centres were not subjected to deprivation of liberty, and efforts were made so that they could access education and health services within the community, in particular to avoid stigmatization.

40. While Guatemalan legislation on the rights of the child was quite robust, it had admittedly been lacking in practical impact. To address that shortcoming, it would be necessary to take into account the political, economic, psychological and social aspects of the problems that the legislation addressed; that was currently a focus of the new Government's concern.

41. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Counsel General's Office provided legal representation for children and adolescents who were unrepresented and assistance in cases in which there was a threat of human rights violations; it also intervened when a crime had been committed, and it issued legal opinions, as required, in all types of legal proceedings.

The Office provided all of those services to children, whether nationals or non-nationals, in the context of human mobility. Assistance was provided under a national protocol on the reception and care of migrant children, which had been drafted with input from a number of institutions, including the Counsel General's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Social Welfare Secretariat. The protocol provided for the reunification of children with their families without recourse to legal proceedings. Foreign children on the move were supported under a protocol to assist foreign unaccompanied children and adolescents who had been displaced. That protocol was accompanied by a guide to assessing the best interests of the child, including recognition of refugee status, where appropriate.

42. The Counsel General's Office and the Ministry of the Interior were involved in supporting children living with a parent who was deprived of his or her liberty in the event that the child decided to leave the parent's care on reaching 18 years of age, if the parent decided that the child should leave the prison system, or if the child complained of human rights violations. A specialized care protocol had been introduced in 2020 that set out the procedures for children living with family members in places of deprivation of liberty and for children who visited a parent living in those places, in an effort to prevent the secondary victimization of children and to protect their best interests. All of those protocols were continuously revised by the institutions involved.

43. **A representative of Guatemala** said that there was no record of the involvement of children as young as 5 in the gangs known as *maras*. Children's involvement in *maras* usually started after the age of 10, so preventive services needed to target children younger than that. Several programmes for children and adolescents were in place in schools and in the community and included action by community leaders; violence prevention commissions had also been set up.

44. More than 23,000 persons were deprived of their liberty, some 14 per cent of whom were women, and around 70 children under 4 were living with their mothers in five places of deprivation of liberty. Civil society organizations and court decisions had focused attention on those children and, alongside the specialized protocol, a unit had been established to improve conditions for them. The Government had cooperated with civil society organizations to develop training and proposals on law and policy in that area.

45. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Social Welfare Secretariat of the Office of the First Lady supported children under 4 whose mothers had been deprived of liberty through a programme that covered education, health and nutrition. Specialist teachers and early years education were provided in cooperation with the prison system, while health-care provision involved the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and included access to immunization, emergency care, and iron and folic acid supplements. The Social Welfare Secretariat assessed children for nutritional problems and offered appropriate support. The gaps in provision for children living with their mothers in places of deprivation of liberty had been inherited from the previous Administration; work to fill those gaps was limited by budgetary considerations and the absence of an agreement with the Ministry of the Interior on how to deal with such children. In 2023, 150 prison officials had received training on the specialized protocol on children and adolescents with family members who had been deprived of their liberty.

46. The Social Welfare Secretariat also helped families that had returned to the country to reintegrate into their communities and provided them with psychosocial support. Greater efforts were needed, however, to help families remain. In the first three months of 2024, more than 1,400 children under 17 had benefited from such assistance.

47. **A representative of Guatemala** said that his country was a post-conflict State in which many victims of conflict had not received any reparation. The previous Administration had shut down the institutions and programmes for the peace process and victim compensation. His Administration recognized that the peace agreements remained relevant and applicable, and that victims of the armed conflict should be provided with reparation and care; work was under way with the Ministry of Finance to obtain sufficient funding for reparation for victims. In addition, a number of rulings by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights relating to the conflict needed to be implemented. The President had committed to addressing land conflicts by recognizing the land ownership of Indigenous

Peoples and subsistence farmers. The Ministry of the Interior had established a body to defend human rights defenders who were active in the field of land conflicts and had been targeted through threats or arbitrary prosecution. The Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights was developing a policy for protection of human rights defenders that would also cover freedom of the press and of expression.

48. To protect natural resources and mitigate the effects of human activity on the environment, the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources had declared a moratorium on the grant of mining licences. Further measures planned included the establishment of a ministerial portfolio for that area. There were also plans to establish a directorate for business and human rights, and work in that regard had started, together with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. United Nations technical assistance would be needed in the medium term to ensure that appropriate measures were introduced. The standing mechanisms for dialogue with civil society had been destroyed by the previous Administration, and anti-democratic activism remained an issue, including within the judiciary. That issue was being addressed through the establishment of a bureau on the rights of victims and the deceased. Victims of human rights violations should be believed, and it was the legal and moral responsibility of the State to hear them and protect them.

49. Enforcement of the law remained a problem. Corruption was deeply rooted and, as had been highlighted at a national presidential conference on the issue, continued to operate. It was a priority area for action, which would also entail changing cultural narratives.

50. **Ms. Marshall-Harris** said that, despite her expectations, she had been heartened by the dialogue with the State party. Initial signs of reform, a willingness to acknowledge the need for improvement, and respect for the diversity of the State party gave a sense that the Government was prepared to truly take on the task of advancing children's rights. An important step in that regard would be ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. She wished the members of the delegation well in their future endeavours for the rights of children of all ethnicities.

51. **A representative of Guatemala** said that he was grateful for the opportunity for dialogue with the Committee and noted that the preparation process had proven helpful in identifying areas for further work. His Government was committed to cooperation with the Committee, the human rights treaty bodies, international organizations and international human rights courts. Human rights policies and programmes needed sustainable budgets, since the protection of human rights was a perpetual task. He had noted, in particular, the concerns raised about comprehensive sex education, budgets and the legislative agenda. In his role as Executive Director of the Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights, he would suggest that the Government should consider ratifying the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.

52. **The Chair** said that since 2024 marked the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure, it was a particularly appropriate year for the State party to consider its ratification. Work was ongoing on the Committee's draft general comment No. 27 on children's rights to access to justice and effective remedies, and she was therefore pleased to note the State party's interest in that area.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.