



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child Ninety-sixth session

Summary record of the 2798th meeting*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 13 May 2024, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Skelton

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* No summary record was issued for the 2797th meeting.

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

Consideration of reports of States parties *(continued)*

Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Egypt (CRC/C/EGY/5-6, CRC/C/EGY/Q/5-6 and CRC/C/EGY/RQ/5-6)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Egypt joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Egypt**, introducing his country's combined fifth and sixth periodic reports (CRC/C/EGY/5-6), said that the delay in submitting the reports, which had been due in 2016, was a result of the serious political and economic challenges that Egypt had had to face in the years leading up to 2014. Since then, the country had come a long way towards building a modern civil State, achieving sustainable development and cultivating a national human rights system underpinned by law. Egypt had launched its first five-year national human rights strategy in September 2021 and the state of emergency had been lifted in October of the same year. Efforts were being made to modernize laws and institutions and align them with obligations arising from international and regional human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Act No. 182 of 2023 expanded the mandate of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, which was the supreme authority responsible for proposing public policy regarding the country's approximately 42 million children. Egypt had withdrawn its reservation to article 21 (2) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and amended the Nationality Act in order to grant both parents an equal right to transmit their nationality to their children. The Fund for the Differently Abled, for persons with disabilities, had been augmented; penalties for failing to register the birth of a child had been increased; and the age at which children could acquire an identity card had been lowered to 15 years.
3. The theme of children's rights had been incorporated into several national strategies, including Egypt Vision 2030 and the Strategic Framework for Childhood and Motherhood 2018–2030, as well as into initiatives aimed, inter alia, at empowering women, combating human trafficking and promoting alternative care. The Government had updated strategies to improve the quality of education and ensure universal access to school, and it was moving forward with its plans to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2025. Significant resources had been allocated to improving the availability and quality of data on poverty and social protection, and the State was promoting the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals at the governorate level. Human rights were being included in annual socioeconomic development plans and, in the year 2023/24, the general State budget would, for the first time, incorporate strategic objectives based on principles enshrined in the national human rights strategy.
4. The National Observatory for the Rights of the Child was collecting statistics and developing its own database, in cooperation with the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics. Independent monitoring of human rights was undertaken by the National Council for Human Rights, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The proportion of girls under 17 who had undergone genital mutilation had fallen from 18 per cent in 2014 to 12 per cent in 2021. The proportion of children aged between 5 and 17 engaged in economic activities had also fallen, from 7 per cent in 2014 to 4.9 per cent in 2021. Under the national strategy for early childhood development, launched in 2022, 1.5 million children were attending 25,200 kindergartens. An additional 43 residential kindergartens housed 507 children deprived of family care. Health, educational and psychosocial services had been made available for homeless children. In all, 5,705 children had been removed from street situations and 2,938 of them had been reintegrated with their families or placed in care institutions. Care had also been provided to 11,774 children who spent most of their time on the street.
5. A number of programmes for the early detection of disabilities were being run under the 100 Million Healthy Lives initiative. Reproductive health services were provided at 35 specialized clinics, and there were plans to open a further 150 such clinics in areas most in need. The 1,000 Golden Days initiative had helped to reduce the rate of births by caesarean section and to encourage breastfeeding. The Ministry of Health and Population had created a database on newborns with disabilities and was seeking to gather data on children with

disabilities between the ages of 6 and 11. The Ministry also monitored the incidence of domestic injuries and road traffic accidents, and it had fully automated its system for registering births, deaths and routine vaccinations in children.

6. The number of students in pre-university education had gone up from 27.3 million in the academic year 2021/22 to 28 million in 2022/23, an increase of 2.8 per cent. The number of elementary schools had risen from 18,762 in 2018/19 to 19,877 in 2022/23. Overall, the number of schools nationwide had increased from 55,214 in 2019 to 61,512 in 2024, and the number of classrooms from 500,168 to 556,888. An additional 200 community education schools had been built, bringing their total number to 4,943, which served 140,000 children. Other educational projects had been run in rural areas and, in 2018, the Government had adopted a five-year project to improve teaching conditions in State-run schools.

7. The national alternative care strategy 2021–2030 focused on children’s survival, development, health, education and protection. Thanks to the simplification of foster care procedures, requests from families had increased by 17 per cent, and around 20,000 children had been placed with 19,800 foster families. Psychosocial care and legal support had been provided to 3,650 children in foster families or orphanages in 14 governorates. By the academic year 2020/21, 108,000 students with disabilities had been integrated into 19,000 schools nationwide. More than 100,000 textbooks in Braille had been distributed, as well as 40,000 books for students with hearing disabilities. Between 2019 and 2023, over 139,000 children with disabilities had benefited from special nurseries and other care facilities. Projects had also been run that specifically sought to assist children with autism and other cognitive impairments by involving them in social, community and sporting activities. The projects had benefited around 1,000 such children in 18 governorates.

8. In May 2022, the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology had launched its Digital Cubs initiative, which sought to create a new generation of digitally competent young people capable of competing in the labour market of the future. The initiative focused on developing the information technology skills of 3,000 outstanding students chosen from schools across Egypt. In addition, steps had been taken to empower children in schools; to address problems such as violence, bullying and misconduct; to promote inclusion and acceptance of others; and to create a safe and supportive educational environment. Efforts in that regard also involved teachers and parents, with a focus on building strong and healthy relationships and addressing problems and challenges in children’s behaviour.

9. A children’s parliament had been launched, as well as 12 similar forums at the local level. The 5,000 children involved had participated in 220 activities, including campaigns, competitions, the production of magazines, and in-person or online interviews that had reached almost 15,000 of their peers.

10. New approaches to juvenile justice were being rolled out, including non-custodial sentences, community-based education and reintegration for children at risk. A strategic review of child-friendly justice in Egypt had been undertaken, and a procedural guide on the classification of child offenders had been issued.

11. The Government applied an “out-of-camp” policy towards the more than 9 million foreign migrants and refugees on national territory. Thanks to that policy, the foreigners and their children were able to integrate into local communities and to make use of schools and primary health-care services on an equal footing with Egyptian citizens. A guide to standard operating procedures had been issued to regulate the protection and assistance offered to child asylum seekers, refugees and trafficking victims.

12. **Ms. Beloff** (Country Task Force) said that, following the State party’s very welcome withdrawal of its reservation to articles 20 and 21 of the Convention some years previously, she wished to know how those provisions were being applied in Egypt, particularly in the light of the large numbers of children in alternative care. It would be helpful to know if Act No. 182 of 2023, which extended the mandate of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, was already in force and whether the Council coordinated all national policies affecting children, or if its role was limited to oversight and monitoring.

13. The statistics provided by the State appeared to have a disproportionate focus on children at risk, defined as children in street situations, working children and children in conflict with the law. That information was of course important, but the Committee hoped that the delegation could provide more up-to-date statistics on children of all categories, particularly given the amount of time that had passed since the submission of the previous periodic report. She wished to know what action was taken on the basis of the information collected by the National Observatory for the Rights of the Child.

14. The delegation might explain how children whose rights had been violated could seek justice and remedies, and what action was taken to inform them of the options available to them. Did that action also cover children who did not have a responsible adult to whom to turn? She wondered whether there were other mechanisms, in addition to child helplines, to which children could have recourse, and whether awareness-raising campaigns were conducted in schools and the mass media, for instance. What steps were taken to ensure that reports of violations reaching mechanisms run by civil society organizations were then referred to the competent State body? She hoped to learn more about any international cooperation in which Egypt engaged in the context of implementing the Convention. Lastly, she wished to know how the national corporate social responsibility index worked, and whether it had been effective in protecting the rights of children.

15. **Mr. Chopel** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that he looked forward to hearing about any action being taken to promote the enforcement of the non-discrimination provisions enshrined in the 2014 Constitution and the Children's Code. The Committee wished to know how Act No. 77 of 1943, which regulated inheritance, ensured equal rights for male and female heirs. He asked what steps had been taken to eliminate provisions in the Criminal Code and the Civil Status Code that discriminated against women and girls. He hoped to learn about measures to combat any discrimination that children might suffer on the grounds of their race, religion, ethnicity, poverty, disability or migration status. The Committee had received disturbing reports about the situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons in Egypt and looked forward to hearing about any action being taken to address its concerns on that front.

16. He wished to learn more about the enforcement of the provision in the Children's Code whereby persons could not be sentenced to death for crimes they committed when under the age of 18, and about effective and independent age determination processes. Were persons treated as children in the case of any doubt about their exact age? The Committee was particularly concerned about the situation of children who, having been sentenced to death, might spend years waiting for their age to be officially recognized and their death sentence commuted. There seemed to be a lack of disaggregated data concerning such children. Lastly, he wanted to know whether the Egyptian Children's Forum was operational and how it contributed to fostering meaningful participation.

17. **Ms. Otani** (Country Task Force) said that she had been happy to note a reported 100 per cent birth registration rate in the period 2020–2023. She was concerned, nonetheless, by information suggesting that birth registration necessitated the presence of the father or proof of the parents' marriage, a requirement that could create obstacles for registering the birth of certain categories of children. She wished to learn more about the Administrative Court's 2019 ruling whereby a child of an unknown father was entitled to be registered under the name of a fictitious father, and about cases where the father was known but was absent or untraceable, or where the mother was not in possession of a marriage certificate. The delegation might also provide details about registration of the birth of children of unmarried parents or of non-Egyptian parents. Did the latter have to produce a marriage certificate certified by their embassy and how long did such a procedure take? She was concerned that the legal requirement to register a birth within 15 days would pose problems for people in remote areas and disadvantaged communities, and she hoped to hear about any mechanism in place to accommodate their needs, such as mobile birth registration systems.

18. She welcomed the recent amendments to the Nationality Act. Nonetheless, the Committee remained concerned that Egyptian women married to foreigners were still encountering obstacles in passing their nationality to their children. The same concern had also been expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. She would appreciate it if the delegation could clarify the status of children born to Egyptian

women married to foreign men, notably Palestinians, and inform the Committee if there had been any instances where children's right to nationality had been affected by the revocation of their parents' nationality on grounds of national security.

19. It would be useful to hear about any measures taken to implement recommendations made in March 2023 by the Human Rights Committee concerning freedom of conscience and religious belief. According to reports, children applying for national identity documents were required to register their religious identity as one of the three recognized religions: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. The Committee wished to know if those reports were true and, if so, how children who did not belong to any of those groups could obtain an identity document.

20. Despite the assurances given by the State party, it was still not clear how children's right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly was protected, particularly in the light of concerns recently expressed by the Committee against Torture concerning excessive use of force during demonstrations, which had led to deaths and injuries among hundreds of peaceful protesters, including children. She hoped to hear about any investigations and reviews of legislation that had arisen as a result of the recommendations made by the Committee against Torture. She would appreciate receiving information about the current status of the draft national strategy to protect children from the risks of the Internet and online sexual exploitation the timeline for its implementation. She wished to know how children's rights to access information, to privacy and to protection from harmful online content were guaranteed. She wondered whether there were gaps in online access for certain categories of children, such as those in rural areas, disadvantaged communities or street situations. Lastly, the Committee hoped to receive an answer to the question it had raised in the list of issues ([CRC/C/EGY/Q/5-6](#)) concerning reparations in the 2022 case where the data of more than 72,000 children involved in the Egyptian Scholastic Test had been leaked.

21. **Ms. Alassane Moulaye** (Country Task Force) said that domestic violence against children in Egypt remained commonplace, affecting up to 75 per cent of those under 14, according to statistics of the Ministry of Social Solidarity. She wished to learn about any steps that the Government was taking in that regard and about the status of a bill being contemplated to combat such violence. She would also be interested to hear more details about a mechanism, which could be referred to as a one-stop shop, created in 2021 to receive and coordinate the response to complaints of abuse from women and children. Was the mechanism sufficiently confidential and adapted to the specific requirements of children? In particular, she wondered if it was adequately resourced and whether it covered the entire country or was limited to large urban centres. It would be useful to know how, once a complaint had been received, the mechanism coordinated multisectoral actions and whether other stakeholders, notably the police, had the powers and resources to refer cases to the courts. More generally, she asked what measures were taken to combat the sociocultural attitudes that normalized violence against children. The Committee wished to know if child victims of violence received a free expert medical examination, particularly in the light of information that the shortage of forensic doctors meant that physical evidence was often lacking and that, consequently, many cases never reached the courts. She was concerned that legal prohibitions against violence were not interpreted as banning all forms of corporal punishment against children, leaving them exposed to abuse in the family, alternative care facilities, schools and detention centres. In that regard, she hoped to hear about plans to abrogate article 7 bis of the Children's Code, which concerned the "right to discipline".

22. Egypt continued to have one of the highest rates of female genital mutilation in the region. Despite all the Government's efforts, in some areas up to 94 per cent of girls between the ages of 13 and 17 had suffered genital mutilation. One serious concern was the medicalization of the practice, with 7 out of 10 victims having had the procedure performed by a health-care professional. The Committee wished to hear about any activities aimed at raising community awareness about the dangers of female genital mutilation, particularly in rural areas and in upper Egypt, and about any plans or partnerships being envisaged to put an end to the practice.

23. Although Act No. 126 of 2008 set the marriageable age at 18 for both sexes, it envisaged no criminal sanctions for persons who violated the law. Thus, underage girls were married off and families would simply wait until the girl reached the age of 18 before

recording the marriage. As a consequence, not only would any children born before then remain unregistered but the brides themselves often suffered physical, emotional and sexual abuse and were obliged to abandon their education. In the light of that, she asked what steps were being taken to strengthen the law so as to penalize the persons responsible for child marriage and to encourage reporting by members of the community. The Committee had also received troubling information about temporary or seasonal marriages of girls to wealthy men holidaying in Egypt. She wished to know what measures had been taken to combat that practice, which was tantamount to sexual tourism.

24. According to the State party's own statistics, thousands of children – including children who lacked parental care, children at risk and children with disabilities – were being held in social protection institutions. The delegation might explain why those children had been institutionalized when, in fact, they had the same right to a family life as all other children. Did the alternative care strategy for children, launched in 2021, also envisage a deinstitutionalization process? Specifically, she wondered whether support was available to help vulnerable children remain in their own family environment, rather than being placed in an institution. Were there clear criteria, based on the best interests of the child, for determining whether to place a child in an institution or with a foster family? How were such placements monitored to ensure the quality of the care provided? What was done to protect children in institutions from violence and ill-treatment and to enable them to report cases when they occurred.

The meeting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.

25. **A representative of Egypt** said that his country's reservation to articles 20 and 21 had been based on Islamic sharia, which did not recognize adoption. With the introduction, under the Children's Code, of an alternative care system akin to adoption, there was no longer any reason for that reservation and it had therefore been withdrawn. Many universal values such as justice, equality, equal opportunity and social protection were enshrined in Islamic sharia; there were no grounds to believe that there was any inconsistency between sharia and the Convention.

26. **A representative of Egypt** said that Act No. 182 of 2023 was in force. The Act granted the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood legal personality and guaranteed its independence. The Council had the role of proposing public policy and coordinating the action of stakeholders in all matters affecting mothers and children.

27. **A representative of Egypt** said that the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood was developing the National Observatory for the Rights of the Child, working alongside the State Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics to gather information, conduct research and carry out studies related to children in Egypt. The State Authority had a database that included more than 8,000 indicators to assess the situation of children in Egypt. For its part, the Observatory was in the process of developing its own database with information on children at risk, disaggregated by age, sex, geographical location and social background, as well as an integrated online map of the services available for such children. The map was accessible by child protection committees and other stakeholders in all governorates.

28. **A representative of Egypt** said that, whereas previously there had been a number of bodies working in the area of childhood, with the entry into force of Act No. 182 of 2023, the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood had become the sole mechanism responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of childhood-related policies and strategies.

29. **A representative of Egypt** said that the child helpline, which had been established by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood in 2005, gathered reports from and about children at risk. It operated confidentially and free of charge, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The helpline did not limit its services to receiving reports and complaints; it also served as a protective umbrella for children, endeavouring to raise their awareness, provide them with advice and counselling, and encourage their social integration.

30. **A representative of Egypt** said that protection for children's rights across the private sector, civil society and the public sector remained a priority for the Government and society

as a whole. The private sector, in fact, played a vital role in development, and companies had a responsibility to allocate part of their budgets and their profits in favour of child protection programmes. The private sector intervened in development programmes in order to ensure the sustainability of interventions that ensured the welfare and protection of children.

31. **A representative of Egypt** said that, of the 9 million foreigners currently on Egyptian territory, 600,000 were asylum-seekers registered with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 40 per cent of whom were children under 18. The number of newcomers had increased sharply over recent years, in particular following the crises in the Gaza Strip and the Sudan. Of the more than 500,000 Sudanese who had entered the country, 70 per cent were women and children. The Government adopted an “out-of-camp” policy towards refugees and asylum-seekers, endeavouring to ensure their socioeconomic integration into host communities and to uphold their rights to, inter alia, equality, non-discrimination and association. Refugees and asylum-seekers could also work, under certain conditions, and they enjoyed access to basic services such as birth registration, identity documents, justice, health care and pre-university education.

32. **A representative of Egypt** said that inheritance rights under Egyptian law were non-discriminatory. They were based not on the sex of the parties concerned but on their respective social responsibilities and obligations. In many cases, application of Islamic sharia resulted in women’s share of inheritance being greater than men’s. Differences in inheritance quotas, when they arose, were usually due to economic, social or cultural considerations.

33. Under the Children’s Code, no sentence of death or life imprisonment could be handed down against a child who was under 18 at the time the offence was committed. A child committing an offence that attracted a sentence of death or life imprisonment would be sentenced to a fixed term of imprisonment. If the offence attracted a fixed term of imprisonment, the child would be placed in detention or in a childcare facility for at least 3 months. Judicial errors that had occurred in that regard, when the criminal courts had handed down inappropriate sentences against children, had been rectified by the Court of Cassation.

34. **A representative of Egypt** said that he wished to add that the country’s laws had recently been amended in order to criminalize the denial of legitimate inheritance – a problem that particularly affected rural women.

35. **A representative of Egypt** said that, to ensure that children’s views were taken into account, a children’s parliament had been established. It represented children from all parts of the country and functioned in the same way as the Egyptian Parliament. The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, through the Egyptian Children’s Forum, had organized a symposium at which children had discussed the topic of children and climate change and had developed proposals that they had submitted to the Parliament. The Council coordinated with all relevant authorities to ensure that the voices of children were heard and their best interests were taken into account, particularly in the drafting of laws and the development of programmes and policies.

36. **A representative of Egypt** said that the Children’s Code guaranteed the birth registration of all children, irrespective of their parents’ nationality and of whether the child had been born in wedlock or not. The law provided that children must be registered within 15 days of their birth – a provision intended to encourage families to register their children. To assist families who encountered difficulties in that regard, the Government provided mobile birth registration services covering both urban and rural areas.

37. **A representative of Egypt** said that, in 2023, the Egyptian Nationality Act had been amended so that all children born to Egyptian mothers could acquire Egyptian nationality, regardless of the father’s nationality. There had been several cases in which children of Egyptian mothers and Palestinian fathers had been granted Egyptian nationality. Persons who encountered difficulties in obtaining Egyptian nationality could file a complaint with the competent authority or turn to the courts.

38. **A representative of Egypt** said that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood had devised a strategy to protect children on the Internet. The strategy had been prepared in an inclusive fashion,

with input from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Culture, media authorities, the National Council for Women and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities. A national action plan had been drawn up, under which measures were implemented with the participation of schoolchildren, teachers, social workers, experts and relevant authorities. The aims of the strategy and action plan, which were in line with international protection standards, included teaching children to use the Internet safely and combating digital illiteracy.

39. The Government had put in place several awareness-raising programmes, including the Noura Framework – a girls’ empowerment initiative spearheaded by the National Council for Women and the United Nations Population Fund. Under the initiative, which had included the broadcast of an animated film on television and social media, the authorities had raised awareness about several issues affecting children, including risks and dangers on the Internet, harmful practices such as child labour, and the importance of remaining in education.

40. **A representative of Egypt** said that successive Egyptian constitutions had guaranteed the freedom of religious worship, although that freedom might be restricted for reasons of public order and safety. The courts enforced the right to freedom of religion or belief. The Administrative Court, in case No. 12780/61, had ruled to suspend the execution of a decision that required birth certificates and identity cards to carry an indication of religious affiliation. As a result of that judgment, persons who were not Christians, Jews or Muslims were permitted to put a dash in the religious affiliation field on official documents.

41. **A representative of Egypt** said that articles 25 to 27 of the Personal Status Law ensured the right of mothers, regardless of their religion, to register a child born outside of marriage. Newborns who had unknown parents, or one unknown parent – as in the case of children born outside of marriage whose mothers did not wish to reveal the father’s identity – and who were taken into the care of the State, would be registered in accordance with the information provided by the person who gave them into care. If a parent subsequently wished to acknowledge maternity or paternity, then he or she was required by law to submit an application. If a child was born as a result of incest or was born to a married mother and a father who was not her husband, then the father’s name would not appear on the birth certificate.

42. **A representative of Egypt** said that the Constitution and the Criminal Code prohibited all forms of physical violence and corporal punishment. The Children’s Code protected children against violence and abuse and provided for harsher penalties in the event of offences committed by adults against children. At the beginning of every academic year, the Ministry of Education issued instructions informing principals and teachers of the absolute ban on the physical punishment of students. The Government took the view that students should be disciplined through positive parenting methods. In 2021, it had established a national committee for positive education, chaired by the Minister for Social Solidarity and composed of high-level officials and representatives of relevant government bodies, including the Ministry of Health and Population, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture, as well as representatives of the Coptic Church and civil society and NGOs. In the framework of a positive parenting programme drawn up with the support of the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Government had organized community dialogues and provided training for teachers and parents on positive parenting principles. Those principles had been incorporated into all national initiatives for the protection and empowerment of children, notably the Dawwie initiative and the Noura Framework. Moreover, the Ministry of Social Solidarity had launched the Waai campaign, consisting in the dissemination of 12 messages to increase community awareness of phenomena harmful to the welfare of children.

43. **A representative of Egypt** said that the Civil Status Act prohibited the registration of marriage contracts involving persons under 18. Registrars or notaries who documented child marriages would face penalties. The Government made a distinction between early marriages and “transactional marriages”, which might take place as a consequence of the abuse of parental authority and which were banned under the Anti-Human Trafficking Act.

44. To combat early marriage, the Government implemented awareness-raising programmes that targeted communities where the practice had been observed. The National

Council for Childhood and Motherhood, in cooperation with various ministries and the National Council for Women, were implementing the Dawwie national initiative for the empowerment of girls, with the aim of building a supportive environment for girls, increasing their awareness and allowing them to freely express their views and ideas to their families and parents.

45. Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism had taken steps to strengthen its oversight of tourism facilities in order to prevent transactional marriage, which could be considered a form of human trafficking. In that regard, the National Centre for Social and Criminal Research had conducted a study that focused on the cultural, psychological, social and economic factors that led people to fall prey to trafficking, the detection of networks of offenders, and the development of a holistic strategy to address the problem.

46. **Ms. Aho** said that she wished to know why, if all births in the State party were registered, the penalties in connection with birth registration had been stiffened, how long it took for a birth certificate to be issued once a birth had been registered, and why a person's religion was mentioned on his or her birth certificate.

47. **Mr. Gudbrandsson** asked whether the State party had considered setting up a so-called one-stop shop to provide multidisciplinary support services to victims of child abuse.

48. **Mr. Chopel** said that he wondered whether the delegation could elaborate on efforts to ensure that children with disabilities, as provided by law, attended school. He wished to know what progress had been made towards the development of a system for the collection of data in relation to children with disabilities. He would welcome further information on access to health care and to inclusive education for such children.

49. It would be interesting to learn more about the health insurance system in the State party. Insight into the measures that were being taken to ensure that primary health care, including maternal and child health care, was available in rural areas and to combat malnutrition and obesity would likewise be welcome. In addition, he wondered what impact the Thousand Days of Life Programme had had and what efforts, aimed at awareness-raising and rehabilitation, in particular, had been made to prevent children from abusing alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

50. Noting that the draft bill on combating all forms of violence against women and girls made abortion a criminal offence, he wished to know how close the bill was to being signed into law and what abortion services were available in the State party. He also asked whether children had access to confidential and child-friendly sexual and reproductive health rights education.

51. **Ms. Alassane Moulaye** asked what measures were being taken to guarantee an adequate standard of living for all children in the State party, in particular those in rural areas, and to ensure that the amounts which families in difficulty received in welfare benefits were equivalent to the minimum wage. She also asked whether the State party had a social protection policy and a programme to fight poverty in rural areas of upper Egypt.

52. **Ms. Otani** said that she would welcome clarification of how children's specific concerns and needs were reflected in the measures that the State party took in relation to the environment and climate change, including the formulation of its nationally determined contribution to the global response to climate change. She wished to know whether the environmental or related recommendations made by children serving in mock parliaments informed the development of national policy, and whether children were given opportunities to learn about their right to a healthy environment and build their capacity to participate in decision- and policymaking.

53. In view of mentions of school fees in the State party's combined periodic reports, she wondered whether education, including preschool, was in fact free of charge. She would appreciate receiving detailed information on retention and school dropout rates among children with disabilities and those in rural areas, in poverty and in street situations, as well as minority, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee children. She wished to know whether the societal schools mentioned in the periodic reports were the same as the schools referred to as

community education schools and said that it would be helpful to learn more about those schools.

54. She wished to know what was the State party's policy on inclusive education for children with disabilities, whether efforts were made to promote the inclusion of such children in mainstream schools, and whether such schools, as well as the necessary school transportation, were physically accessible to them. She wished to know, too, whether those disability matters were addressed in the Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan 2014–2030.

55. The delegation might comment on the plans that the Government had made to ensure that there were enough classrooms to accommodate all school-aged children in the State party. It might also comment on the reported increase in physical and verbal violence, in particular in schools in poor urban areas. It would be helpful to learn whether teachers or children were responsible for the violence, what its root causes were, and how the Government had responded or intended to respond to it.

56. She asked whether human rights education was compulsory in all schools and in teacher training programmes, and whether it covered all the rights under the Convention. Lastly, she asked whether children in rural areas and children with disabilities had access to leisure-time activities. If so, did girls participate in such activities on an equal footing with boys?

57. **Ms. Beloff** said that she wished to know more about how child migrants were treated on arrival in the State party. She wondered, for example, whether they were detained – in short, whether they were treated any differently from children in conflict with the law.

58. She would welcome more information on the conditions of the apprenticeships that children as young 13 could begin. It would be interesting to know, for instance, what the working hours were and what penalties were incurred for violations of the laws on child labour.

59. Children in street situations, like child migrants, were considered children at risk, and she wondered how they were treated and what the procedural guide mentioned in the State party's combined periodic reports touched on. She also wondered what was done not just to respond to trafficking in persons or harassment and abuse but also to prevent them.

60. She would like to know whether the Government had any plans to ensure that the administration of juvenile justice in the State party was fully compatible with its obligations under the Convention. She would like to know, too, whether minors could be tried by military courts and, if so, whether military judges had the training to preside over proceedings involving minors and whether any plans had been made to change the situation. In addition, it would be interesting to learn how many minors were deprived of their liberty and for what reasons. At what age could they be deprived of their liberty? Was consideration ever given to alternatives to deprivation of liberty?

61. **A representative of Egypt** said that the penalties in relation to birth registration matters that had been made more severe concerned not the failure to declare a birth but conduct such as the deliberate provision of false information about a birth. Penalties had also been introduced for registering a single birth more than once.

62. The laws of the three major religions present in Egypt played a major role in determining the civil rights of the Egyptian people, each according to his or her religion. Birth certificates and other identity documents mentioned the bearer's religion to ensure that he or she could exercise the rights – the right to polygamy for Muslim men, for example – conferred on him or her as an adherent of a particular faith.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.