



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 15 May 2024, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Skelton

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

Consideration of reports of States parties (*continued*)

Combined fifth to seventh periodic reports of Estonia (CRC/C/EST/5-7; CRC/C/EST/QPR/5-7)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Estonia joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair**, welcoming the delegation of Estonia to the meeting, said that other members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
3. **A representative of Estonia**, introducing her country's combined fifth to seventh periodic reports (CRC/C/EST/5-7), said that, despite the challenges it faced, Estonia had made significant progress towards promoting the rights of children. Welfare strategies to support families and children, which were funded from the State budget, were regularly updated, and action had been taken to increase child benefits, allocate additional funds for children in alternative care, support single parents and juvenile offenders and provide treatment for children with rare diseases. The national child protection system was being developed to improve cross-sectoral cooperation and identify children in need. It was hoped that legislative changes in 2025 would serve to update the casework model for child protection services. Estonia was also seeking to exploit the opportunities of the digital environment by automating processes and developing tools to make access to public services and benefits easier and more convenient.
4. A number of amendments had been made to the Criminal Code in 2022. The age of sexual consent had been raised to 16; the minimum aged for marriage had been fixed at 18 and the provision whereby persons aged 15 could marry with court permission had been rescinded. The Victim Support Act had entered into force in April 2023. Victim support services were provided to children even in the absence of criminal proceedings, and services for victims of domestic violence had been enhanced.
5. Grants for children with disabilities had increased significantly in 2020, doubling for children with a moderate disability and tripling for those with a severe disability. The severe disability grant had also been extended to children with certain rare diseases. In 2021, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education had begun reforming support services for children with special needs. The aim of the reform was a better integration of services in the fields of health care, education, social protection and employment. An automatic data exchange had been rolled out in 2023. It was intended to facilitate interventions on behalf of needy families by local government child-protection specialists, thereby obviating the need for further assistance. The roll-out of another automatic data-exchange mechanism – for health-care providers and social services, as it happened – was planned for 2025.
6. A free national family mediation service had been launched in 2022 for parents who were separated or in the process of separating. Measures in place to help parents before the birth of a child had been complemented by a new programme of post-partum visits by midwives. The parental support programme “Incredible Years” had been expanded, and new initiatives were being launched to help parents interact with their newborn or adolescent children. A range of family benefits had been increased in 2023, and the benefit for families with multiple children was now among the most generous in Europe. Changes were currently being introduced to the survivors' pension scheme so that children who had lost a primary breadwinner would receive an allowance covering at least half their maintenance costs.
7. A large-scale study on the mental health of children, the results of which were expected by the end of 2024, had been launched in 2023. A cross-sectoral ministerial working group had been set up to examine factors affecting children's mental health. An evidence-based suicide prevention programme known as “Youth Aware of Mental Health” was being adapted for use in schools, and the Ministry of Social Affairs was providing psychologists and mental health support services to supplement the services provided by the municipalities.
8. Recent reforms in the field of education included a plan to transition to Estonian-language education. The aim of the transition, which was expected to be complete

by 2030, was to reduce inequalities between children with different native languages. There were also plans to extend compulsory school attendance in order to keep students in school beyond the basic level and to reduce dropout rates. One notable success had been the provision of school meals, which were subsidized by the State and by local government and were available free of charge to all students. In fact, Estonia contributed more to school meals than most other countries in the world.

9. Estonia endeavoured to find quick and efficient solutions to support vulnerable groups during crisis situations such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the war in Ukraine. During the pandemic, measures had been taken to enable children to continue their education from home. For its part, the Ministry of Education had rolled out a pandemic exit strategy 2021–2025 that was intended to address the mental health challenges of students and teachers and close educational gaps. As a consequence of the war in Ukraine, 52,000 refugees had entered Estonia. Indeed, refugees accounted for around 4 per cent of the national population, making Estonia one of the top three refugee-hosting States in Europe. Of the 9,000 child refugees who had entered the country, 40 were unaccompanied and required alternative care. Foreign children in Estonia were entitled to the same care as Estonian children. The Government supported the return of child refugees to their families in Ukraine; it did not allow them to be adopted in Estonia. In addition, the Government had allocated additional funding to support the education of child refugees from Ukraine; it had opened two schools for them in Tallinn and ran summer camps to help them integrate into Estonian society. Estonia, having already ratified the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, had started the process of ratifying the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. It was hoped that the process would be finalized by the end of 2024.

10. **Ms. Otani** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that she wished to commend the State party for the many reforms it had introduced, notably in areas such as family support, victim support, alternative care, children with disabilities and child justice. She hoped the delegation could explain the connection between those reforms – and legislation concerning the implementation of the Convention more generally – and the 2016 Child Protection Act, which seemed to have a pivotal role as the basic framework for all matters relating to children. In particular, she wondered how the changes affected the Social Insurance Board, the functions of which were regulated by the Act, and exactly what role the Board played. She also hoped to hear whether the bill that, according to the State party, had been drafted after a recent assessment of the Act had become law. She would be interested to hear about any plans the Government had to subject its plans, strategies and legislation to child-rights impact assessments.

11. She had been interested to learn about the 2017 administrative reforms, which had significantly reduced the number of municipalities, and to hear that the reforms had had a positive effect on child welfare and protection services, which were chiefly the responsibility of municipalities. Other significant reforms had included the integration of social and health-care services with a view to reducing regional differences and the launch of the “My Municipality” portal by the Ministry of Finance. She wondered how the country’s decentralizing and intersectoral approaches affected awareness-raising activities and how national-level bodies such as ministries interacted with the municipalities in the context of the administrative reform. Specifically, the delegation should explain how disaggregated data were collected and shared among stakeholders at the national and the local levels. The Committee also wished to know what was done to ensure that children’s views were respected and whether they had a say in budgetary and resource allocation processes.

12. She would be interested to hear about access to justice and domestic remedies for children. The delegation should explain whether children could bring cases to court directly or whether they required the consent of their parents, and whether they were eligible for free legal aid. It would be helpful to learn, too, whether information about court procedures was available in child-friendly language. The Committee would also be interested to hear about complaints mechanism in schools and other facilities. She wished to know what age criteria and other factors were taken into account when selecting the members of the committee of young people through which the Chancellor of Justice consulted with children. The

delegation should elaborate on capacity-building initiatives and explain how they accommodated the needs of smaller civil society organizations. It might also indicate whether the Government had any plans to increase the proportion of gross national income it dedicated to overseas development assistance.

13. She looked forward to hearing more about children's rights in the business sector, specifically with regard to health, education, the environment and child labour, and about the status of a proposed amendment to the Equal Treatment Act. She wished to know what specific actions were taken to ensure that, in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child were a primary consideration. She hoped the delegation could give assurances that steps were being taken to address the slight but troubling increase in infant mortality. Despite proposed amendments to the Citizenship Act, concerns persisted concerning the status of children with undetermined citizenship. As the State increasingly embraced its digital transformation, she wondered what steps were being taken to promote appropriate online access for children and make provision for families and children who might not have access to the Internet.

14. **Mr. Gudbrandsson** (Country Task Force) said that he had been greatly heartened to see how much progress Estonia had made in the field of human rights in recent years. He would be interested to hear the delegation's appraisal of the challenges and problems that the administrative transition and decentralization must inevitably have thrown up. The Committee would also like to hear about any steps taken to help children report abuse, violence and neglect. He wondered whether officials received special training on how to talk to children and elicit their narratives. In that regard, one persistent concern was the lack of social workers in the child protection system.

15. He would appreciate further information about the intersectoral aspects of the plan to tackle domestic violence. Specifically, he wished to know whether child protection officials accompanied the police when the latter were called out to a domestic violence incident. He also wished to know whether trauma services and support for domestic violence victims were available in rural areas and in Russian-speaking communities. In addition, he wondered whether the failure to ensure that the legal rights enjoyed by violence victims under the law were extended to child witnesses was addressed in the new Victim Support Act.

16. He wished to know whether there were any plans to extend the *barnahus* model, which was being adopted nationwide for cases involving child sexual abuse, to include, for example, children who had experienced non-sexual physical abuse or domestic violence. He would also be interested to hear about the experience of applying the model to accommodate not only child victims of sexual abuse but also children who had committed sexual offences against other children and about any safeguards that had been put in place. He was concerned about the strict rules surrounding the acquisition of testimony from child victims, which had recently drawn criticism from the European Court of Human Rights, and wondered whether any thought had been given to taking a child's statement in the *barnahus*.

17. He had been pleased to see that several programmes had been introduced to tackle the country's endemic problem of bullying and would be interested to hear what impact those programmes had. He wished to know whether the State party had developed specific software tools to detect and investigate online grooming and whether steps had been taken to criminalize other coercive means of obtaining child abuse material on the Internet. He would also be interested to hear about any legislation to ensure that Internet service providers had fast and effective procedures to block and remove harmful online material involving children. In addition, he wished to know whether the action that the State had taken to tackle corporal punishment, particularly in the light of persistent concerns that many parents and even children continued to consider it normal, had been assessed.

18. He hoped to hear about specific measures taken to enhance the role of fathers in the upbringing of their children and about plans to increase affordable childcare options. Although the State party was to be commended for its deinstitutionalization endeavours, he was disappointed that up to 800 children remained in childcare facilities. In that connection, he wished to know what measures were being taken to reunite children in care with their parents. The delegation should also elaborate on the measures in place to support children whose parents were incarcerated.

19. He was concerned about the lack of services for persons with disabilities in rural areas. It was problematic, in particular, that the Social Insurance Board should be both the executive and the monitoring authority in the provision of such services. He looked forward to receiving up-to-date information about the harmonization of diagnostic and needs-assessment services for children with disabilities. In addition, he would like to hear about any awareness-raising campaigns to combat the stigmatization of and prejudice against children with disabilities.

The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 4.10 p.m.

20. **A representative of Estonia** said that the country's municipalities had been responsible for providing services to children and families since it had regained its independence. There had indeed been administrative reforms in 2017, and as a result the number of municipalities – newly defined as jurisdictions of at least 5,000 residents – had fallen from more than 240 to 79. The effect had been to centralize the provision of services. Municipalities were bigger than they had been and could offer more services, including specialist services.

21. As Estonia was a small country, a single public agency might have a wide range of responsibilities. The Social Insurance Board, for example, which administered the country's pension system, also functioned as its State-level child protection agency. The Board provided the highly specialized child protection services that not all municipalities had the capacity to provide locally.

22. Before changes made in 2023, the Ministry of Finance had been responsible for transferring funds to the municipalities, but since then a new ministry, the Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture, had overseen local government affairs. It administered the dashboard, originally developed by the Ministry of Finance, that enabled municipal officials to see how well they were doing compared to their peers in other municipalities.

23. In some cases, a child's needs might be assessed separately by a doctor, a teacher and a child protection worker. Child protection services were being integrated with a view to avoiding such overlap and ensuring that specialist services were provided more expeditiously. The process was ongoing.

24. The first component of any planned legislative amendment was to consult the persons and entities likely to be affected by it, including, if appropriate, children, families and youth organizations. Some laws contained provisions stating how often they were to be reviewed. Although there was no such provision in the Child Protection Act, child protection indicators, which made it possible for the authorities to see how well they were doing, were evaluated annually and any necessary changes, including to the Act itself, were made.

25. **A representative of Estonia** said that the aim of reforms that were currently under way was to amend the Child Protection Act, the legal framework for the country's child protection system. The bill on the reform of the system had been submitted to the Government in May 2024 and was currently before the parliament. The hope was that it would be signed into law later in the year and enter into force in 2025.

26. Children whose rights had been violated had various means of seeking relief. The most readily accessible one was a helpline that operated around the clock. Around a third of the people who contacted the helpline were children. Operators at the helpline then decided whether to make a referral or recommend other action. Children could also turn to their local child protection workers, whom their schools could, if necessary, help them reach. Substitute homes for children in vulnerable situations were required by law to post information on how those children could make a complaint. Children could also submit complaints to the Ombudsman for Children or turn to the courts. Children 15 or older could apply to the administrative courts without parental consent or the assistance of counsel. Legal aid was available, and it could be provided in a number of languages, in particular Estonian, Russian and English.

27. The State provided free training to all child protection personnel to ensure harmonized working methods in all 79 municipalities. Basic training covered case management, needs assessments, ways of supporting victims of violence and disability issues. Special training was provided as needed. As there were still challenges, however, the training system was

being redesigned. Efforts were also being made to ensure that municipal officials were in a better position to support the child protection workers active in their municipalities.

28. Plans to merge the Gender Equality Act and the Equal Treatment Act and thus strengthen rights protection had not proceeded as quickly as hoped. The Child Protection Act provided clear guidance on how to ensure that the best interests of the child were a primary consideration in all actions concerning children, and children who were involved in court proceedings were heard and assisted throughout the proceedings. The development of a child-friendly health-care system was also under way. Parents did not always have the last word when it came to their children's medical treatment. The children, too, could make their views known.

29. According to a 2020 survey, nearly all the country's children had access to the Internet. With support from the Government, civil society organizations led projects to help children and their parents better navigate the world online. The Government also cooperated with the private sector to protect children online. In addition, media literacy sessions were offered in the schools, and there was a portal with guidance for the parents of young Internet users.

30. Shortages of social workers were a problem throughout Europe, not only in Estonia. As it was highly unlikely that hundreds of additional social workers would turn up in the country from one day to the next, the focus was on enhancing the efficiency of social work. A database to help social and child protection workers with their day-to-day activities was being developed, and a closer look was being taken at the cases, many of which could be better handled by the schools, the health-care system or the courts, that were brought to their attention.

31. Legislative steps were being taken to reinforce the reporting obligations of persons who worked with children. Assessment tools were being developed to help such persons decide what help, if any, a child needed.

32. **A representative of Estonia** said that, although a 2022 study had shown that the measures taken to combat bullying in school, which was indeed a serious problem, were generally effective, bullying indicators had not improved. A number of non-governmental organizations worked in partnership with the Ministry of Education to help educational institutions create safe learning environments. Programmes had been launched to promote the development of social and emotional skills and reduce the incidence of bullying, but, as efforts to prevent bullying should also be integral components of the day-to-day life of a school, not simply programme-based, issues related to mental health and well-being were given increasing coverage in teacher training programmes.

33. **A representative of Estonia** said that, although child witnesses of domestic violence were not considered victims under national criminal procedure law, the police were required to identify their support needs and inform the relevant services. Every effort was made to avoid the revictimization of children participating in court proceedings and to provide them with as safe an environment as possible. Interviews of children who were thought to be victims of crime were conducted by investigators trained in cognitive behavioural therapy. Statements given by children and video recordings of interviews could be used as evidence in court. Child witnesses 14 or older, who were afforded special treatment, were required to appear in court.

34. A well-known figure in Estonia had been convicted of grooming, which was a punishable offence, following a court-approved undercover police operation in which an officer had pretended to be a child. Children were educated at school on how to avoid being groomed, and websites had been set up to provide information to children and their parents on the precautions to take.

35. Glass partitions were no longer used to separate children from their parents during prison visits. Thanks to a change in the law, steps were being taken to enable video calls with prisoners, which would provide an additional means for inmates to maintain contact with their children. Prison officers were trained to communicate appropriately with child visitors in all situations and to make their best interests a primary consideration.

36. **A representative of Estonia** said that there was no dedicated statelessness determination procedure. Stateless persons were identified in the course of asylum and other procedures. Statelessness was not an obstacle to being granted international protection, a residence permit or citizenship. Pursuant to article 9 of the Constitution, foreign nationals and stateless persons had the same constitutional rights, freedoms and duties as Estonian citizens. On 2 May 2024, there had been 43 children with undetermined citizenship under 15 years of age and 21 such children aged 15 to 17 living in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit or other right of residence. Upon reaching 15 years of age, all children, including those with undetermined citizenship and stateless children, could apply for Estonian citizenship on their own account.

37. **A representative of Estonia** said that, over the previous 30 years, there had been groundbreaking developments in neonatal and perinatal medicine, which had contributed to a significant reduction in perinatal mortality, including stillbirths and early neonatal mortality, the rate of which had hovered at or under 1 death per 1,000 live births since 2011. The neonatal and infant mortality rates in Estonia were among the world's lowest. Mortality rates had also fallen for other age groups. A slight increase in the rate among children aged 5 to 14 years observed over the previous three years could not be considered a trend owing to the small number of deaths in absolute terms.

38. More than half of all deaths of children and young people were attributable to injuries, including from self-harm. Measures had therefore been taken to improve the availability and quality of mental health services. Through home visits, parents with young children had been given expert advice on how to make the home a safe environment. Moreover, steps had been taken to improve parenting skills and children's coping and self-management skills, create safe and supportive school environments and foster attitudes and enact laws that deterred drug use. The Ministry of Social Affairs was preparing amendments to the Public Health Act, including to criminalize the promotion of alternative medicines that could be harmful to human health, such as the potion known as Miracle Mineral Solution. In that connection, the Estonian Poison Information Centre had been established to offer timely advice designed to reduce the incidence of illness and death from poisoning. The Centre had a 24-hour helpline operated by health professionals, mostly nurses trained in toxicology. Since the helpline had been set up, there had been a decrease in the numbers of ambulance calls and hospital visits due to poisoning.

39. **A representative of Estonia** said that approximately 70 per cent of children without parental care were living in family-based alternative care. A positive aspect of the institutional care system in Estonia was that it included small family homes for up to six children, some with only one caregiver. A bill had been drafted to improve the system. Since 2018, the number of children under 3 years of age in institutional care had decreased considerably. The average length of stay for children in shelters had fallen from 46 days in 2019 to 33 in 2023. Efforts had been made to increase the number of short-term foster families, including through nationwide awareness-raising campaigns, a television series on foster care broadcast in Estonian and Russian, cooperation between the Social Insurance Board and municipal authorities in arranging foster placements and the improvement of support services for providers of foster care. In 2023, the Government had decided that such services, which had previously been reliant on the European Structural and Investment Funds, would be financed in a more sustainable manner through the State budget.

40. **A representative of Estonia** said that, in recent years, there had been closer collaboration between the police and child protection workers in cases of domestic violence. While such workers did not always accompany the police to crime scenes, they received all relevant information from the police through an automatic exchange of data. On the basis of that information, they could choose to carry out a home visit, among other measures. Children in grave danger were removed from their home and placed in a shelter or in the care of relatives. Police sought the advice of the child protection services when arranging placements. When that was not possible, such as at night, they instead contacted a special unit of the Social Insurance Board, which helped to identify a safe place, completed the necessary documentation and, if necessary, petitioned the courts to restrict parental rights.

41. In accordance with the Victim Support Act, which had entered into force in 2023, all support services were provided to victims of domestic violence irrespective of whether or not

criminal proceedings had been instituted. Child witnesses of such violence were considered victims and had access to State-funded psychological support. Measures had been taken to raise awareness of the vulnerability of child witnesses.

42. The extension of the *barnahus* model to Ida-Viru County and better cooperation between *barnahus* teams and the police had improved the provision of trauma services to victims in the eastern region of the country. The Ministry of Justice, in partnership with several big hospitals in the region, had piloted a “body card” system to enable health professionals to note down signs of violence for possible future reference in criminal proceedings. The pilot project had helped to increase awareness of violence and the needs of victims.

43. Consideration had been given to expanding the *barnahus* – or children’s house – service to victims of violence other than sexual violence. However, it had been decided that the service should first be rolled out in all four regions of the country. The Government intended to commission an analysis of how the service was functioning and how it could be expanded to victims of other forms of violence, including physical and psychological abuse. It also planned to cooperate with local authorities to establish children’s houses in all 15 counties, which would be necessary, given the number of cases, if the service was to be expanded to victims of domestic violence.

44. *Barnahus* specialists had identified children with harmful sexual behaviour as a target group whose complex needs were not being met by existing services. The provision of specialized support to such children, many of whom had been victims of abuse, was an effective means of uncovering victimization. The *barnahus* model did not allow contact between children and their alleged abusers. Service providers had an obligation to prevent the two parties from being present in a *barnahus* at the same time. There were currently no plans to establish a separate institution for children with harmful sexual behaviour. Where a child had been abused by a relative, the focus was on providing the child with all the necessary support rather than securing a conviction, bearing in mind also that psychologists had reported a low recidivism rate in such cases.

45. **Ms. Otani** said that it would be useful to better understand the mandate of the Prevention Council and how it would be affected by the forthcoming amendment to the Child Protection Act. It would also be helpful to hear what training or tools judges and other court officials had available to them to help them hear the views of children involved in proceedings. Could the delegation clarify what age group the State party meant when it referred to young people and youth in the context of participation and whether younger children participated in matters of concern to them as well?

46. **Mr. Gudbrandsson** said that he had not understood whether the harmonization of the methods of assessing children with disabilities had been completed. The delegation was invited to elaborate on how the State party had managed to sidestep the requirement of the Government of Ukraine that children from the same institution in Ukraine should remain together in Estonia.

47. **Ms. Todorova** (Country Task Force) said that she would welcome further information about the concept and effectiveness of the single safe point of contact for initial advice and help for parents of children with special needs.

48. **Ms. Kiladze** asked what the State party was doing both to protect children from threats arising from artificial intelligence and to promote the positive aspects of the technology.

49. **Ms. Aho** said that, since there were no men in the delegation, she wondered whether children’s issues were considered to be the prerogative of women alone in Estonia. She wished to know whether the decentralization process applied only to activities or also to financing and whether municipalities ran the risk of being overburdened.

50. **Ms. Todorova**, noting that, according to a 2022 report by the European Commission, Estonia had the highest level of unmet medical needs in the European Union, said that she wished to learn more about the steps being taken to address the shortage of doctors and other health-care professionals and the reasons for the falling number of graduating doctors and nurses. As children in the State party could make their own decisions about their physical

and mental care and consult a doctor on their own, it would be helpful to know how their capacity was assessed in various health matters and to what extent they could exercise their discretion in situations where their parents explicitly disagreed with them. The delegation was invited to explain how the State party addressed the refusal of parents to vaccinate their children, why school nurses tended not to vaccinate children without notifying the parents despite being authorized to do so and what measures it was taking to increase falling vaccination rates.

51. As the mental health situation of children, especially girls, was troubling, she wondered what measures were being taken to alleviate the shortage of mental health professionals and to provide child-specific and suicide-prevention training to professionals working with children. What suicide-prevention measures did the State party consider the most effective? More generally, why were issues such as mental health and vaccination dealt with by the Ministry of Social Affairs?

52. She would welcome information on any comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education in the compulsory school curriculum and the level of accessibility and funding of the youth sexual health counselling centres. She was curious to know, too, how the debate on intersex children in the State party was unfolding.

53. She wished to know what measures the State party was envisaging to reduce child poverty among the most affected groups, in particular Russian-speaking children. She would welcome the delegation's comments on whether or not family allowances had been increased and on census data according to which more than 15,000 children lived in homes with no water supply and 70,000 in homes without a toilet. In the context of decentralization, she wondered what impact the improved quality and availability of social services had had on the standard of living of children with special needs.

54. It would be interesting to learn about the measures being taken to foster environmental awareness in schools and promote engagement of children in environmental issues. She would also welcome information on the extent to which the State party's plans and strategies regarding the environment and climate change were informed by an approach based on children's rights.

55. **The Chair** (Country Task Force) said that it would be useful to know what proportion of children were enrolled in early childhood education programmes, which level of government was responsible for ensuring that all children from 18 months to 7 years had a place in preschool and what training early childhood educators were required to have. As age 7 seemed late to begin compulsory education, she wondered whether the State party had considered making at least some of the years of early childhood education compulsory. The delegation was invited to comment on the reported lack of speech therapy and other support and on the limited ability to detect disabilities in the early childhood education system.

56. She was curious to hear whether the State party had achieved its target in terms of the number of children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools. She was also curious to know how many years basic education lasted, why enrolment in basic education was falling, why boys were more likely to drop out than girls, why such an apparently small proportion of children moved on to upper secondary education and what measures were in place to help children who did not speak Estonian learn the language. The delegation might comment on reports that children were overburdened with homework and that some children had to travel long distances to school.

57. She wondered how many asylum-seeking and refugee children there were in the State party and whether that number included the children from Ukraine. Further information about how the State party had managed the sudden influx from that country would also be appreciated. It would be helpful to know, too, how many asylum-seeking children were detained and whether they had legal representation. What progress had been made in identifying newly arrived children who might have been recruited or used in armed conflict abroad and in providing them with support?

58. She wished to know whether the State party was considering establishing separate institutions for children who had been convicted of offences, whether the provision allowing the special disciplinary confinement of imprisoned children for up to 15 days was applied and, if so, how it was applied. She wished to know, too, whether the State party had set up a national mechanism for the prevention of torture and what measures the juvenile courts were taking in respect of children with serious psychosocial problems.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.