



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
29 May 2024

Original: English

Committee on the Rights of the Child Ninety-sixth session

Summary record of the 2804th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 16 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 fourth to sixth periodic reports of Paraguay (CRC/C/PRY/4-6; CRC/C/PRY/Q/4-6; CRC/C/PRY/RQ/4-6)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Paraguay joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Paraguay**, introducing his country's combined fourth to sixth periodic reports (CRC/C/PRY/4-6), said that the incorporation of the Convention into the domestic legal order had been a milestone. The responsibility of the family, society and the State for contributing to the protection and the comprehensive development of the child was highlighted in the Constitution, and the adoption in 2001 of the Code on Children and Adolescents had made possible the establishment of a number of administrative and judicial mechanisms for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.
3. Children's affairs, as shown by a sustained increase in public investment in recent years, were of prime importance to his Government. Some of the additional revenue earned from the sale of the electricity generated by the Itaipu hydropower plant, the price of which had recently risen, would be set aside for strategic social spending.
4. The family was a strategic ally of the Government in its efforts to promote and protect the rights of the child. Steps were thus being taken to strengthen families and enable them to play their protective role more effectively.
5. The institution that coordinated the measures taken to implement public policies for children and adolescents, the National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents, had been made a cabinet ministry, the Ministry for Children and Adolescents. No other country in the region had such a ministry. The Ministry oversaw the work of the Municipal Advisory Services on the Rights of Children and Adolescents, which were the operational arms of the National System for the Comprehensive Protection and Advancement of Children and Adolescents. It could also set resources aside to enhance the effectiveness of the Advisory Services and had led efforts to set up departmental and municipal councils for children and adolescents.
6. The Ministry's training institute organized workshops and courses, including on human rights, for actors from the National System for the Comprehensive Protection and Advancement of Children and Adolescents. In June 2024, it would begin the process of certifying the Municipal Advisory Services. The training institute of the Public Defence Service offered similarly useful courses, in particular for officials working in the juvenile justice system.
7. The launch of the National Early Childhood Programme had resulted in improved inter-agency coordination and the wider availability of comprehensive early childhood services. Work on a new such programme, led by the President, was ongoing. Under a recently adopted law, the coverage of school meal programmes would be expanded to reach all the country's schools. The work of the Directorate General of the Civil Registry enabled children to exercise their right to an identity.
8. A number of campaigns had been organized in cooperation with the private sector and civil society to raise public awareness of the need to prevent violence against children, including sexual abuse, and of the means of reporting such conduct. The recent launch of one such campaign had featured the President and his wife. A programme of comprehensive care for victims of sexual abuse had been created in October 2023. Plans, including for training and the creation of teams that would work in various areas of the country, were also being made to combat the trafficking and sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.
9. The personnel staffing the Ministry's toll-free helpline made referrals to the relevant authorities. The Public Defence Service, for its part, had a helpline that channelled complaints from children to the Office of the Public Defender for Children and Adolescents. There were also other means, including an immediate response system that had recently facilitated the rescue of a number of exploited Indigenous children, of putting an end to complex violations of children's rights. The aim of the Programme of Comprehensive Care for Indigenous

Children and Adolescents was to promote the well-being and human development of Indigenous children and adolescents

10. The *Abrazo* Programme, an archetypal programme overseen by the Ministry, had been developed to combat hazardous child labour. The Programme, which covered the entire country, was tangible evidence of a public commitment to the well-being of the country's children. Work was under way to draft a bill that, if it was made law, would abolish unpaid domestic child labour (*criadazgo*).

11. The Ministry's Monitoring Centre for Children and Adolescents had been established to assess the impact of public policies on children. The Comprehensive Social Information System, administered by a unit of the Office of the President, contained comprehensive information on the beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries of social programmes.

12. Measures to promote adolescent health were set forth in the National Plan for Comprehensive Adolescent Health 2023–2030. The number of teenage pregnancies was falling, but coordinated efforts to prevent teenage pregnancy would be made for the foreseeable future. Enriched milk was provided to children under 5 at risk of malnutrition. Programmes to promote vaccination and combat the alarming rise in drug use by adolescents had also been launched.

13. Education had been another area of focus. One noteworthy achievement had been the near universalization of preschool education. Efforts had been made, too, to improve the administration of juvenile justice and enhance its effectiveness.

14. A number of the social programmes that the State had adopted had been instrumental to the success of its ongoing fight against poverty. Measures were being adopted to take children out of long-term institutional care and place them with families. The Government had set in motion work to approve an alternative care and adoption programme that, in part by providing support to families at risk of separation, would help children exercise their right to family life.

15. Paraguay was still facing a number of challenges. It nonetheless undertook to continue adopting public policies intended to ensure that none of the country's children or adolescents was left behind.

16. **Ms. Todorova** (Country Task Force) said that she wondered why so much of the commendable legislation that the State party had adopted since 2010 had, in practice, had so little effect. Act No. 5419/2015, on the other hand, pursuant to which exceptions could be made to the prohibition of child marriage, was incompatible with the Committee's views on child marriage.

17. She wished to know how the emphasis on family of the new plan for children and adolescents, which had replaced the focus on gender, participation, diversity, inclusion, intersectionality, sexual autonomy and reproductive rights of the National Plan for Children and Adolescents 2020–2024, a plan that had reportedly been torn up, had affected children's rights and why the Committee's general comments, in which it had addressed many of the concepts on which the 2020–2024 Plan had focused, had been ignored. As the Ministry of Education and Science had banned what it had referred to as gender ideology from the State party's schools, she wondered whether the mistaken view that teaching children about gender issues was simply an exercise in ideological indoctrination might not make it harder to protect children who were experiencing harm.

18. She would welcome an explanation of the State party's failure to achieve its stated goal of increasing investment in children and adolescents to 7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). It would be helpful to learn, too, what percentage of GDP public spending on children and adolescents had accounted for in 2022 and 2023 and what measures were being taken to increase tax receipts and combat the corruption and other phenomena that limited the availability of the resources needed to finance public services. In addition, it would be interesting to know why, despite the establishment of the National Institute of Statistics, the necessary statistics – in relation to Indigenous children, for example, or children with disabilities – were still not being produced.

19. She wondered what steps were being taken to give effect to the law that provided for the creation of posts for court clerks specializing in juvenile justice and why there were no child-friendly complaints mechanisms outside the justice system. She wished to know, too, what plans had been made to ensure that the Office of the Ombudsman was mandated to monitor matters pertaining to children's rights, how the Government was changing its messaging in response to the voices questioning children's rights, whether information on the Convention was made available in Guarani and other Indigenous languages and what was being done to empower civil society to help promote and protect the rights of the child.

20. The delegation might explain why the Government was of the view that the adoption of comprehensive anti-discrimination was unnecessary. It might also indicate whether hate speech and hate-related violence were criminal offences in their own right and how many cases there had been in which child victims of discrimination – or their representatives – had, in exercise of their constitutional right to petition the authorities, turned to the courts for relief. A comment on the view, often expressed by religious groups in the State party, that parents alone, not the State, had the authority to determine what was in their children's best interest would likewise be welcome.

21. She wished to know what measures were being taken to lower the high mortality of children in the 10–18 age range and to protect children from environmental and climate-related threats. She also wished to know what the Government was doing to protect children from enforced disappearance and to address the troubling deaths of children in State-run institutions, including in Itauguá and Ciudad del Este. Also troubling was the decreasing participation of children and adolescents in the formulation of policies that affected their lives.

22. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that he wondered whether the reasons for the State party's low registration rates had been studied and whether consideration had been given to overhauling the birth registration system. He wondered, too, whether any plans had been made to amend the law that allowed the registrar to refuse to register the birth of a child whose name he or she deemed offensive.

23. He would like to know why secondary school students were denied opportunities to participate in matters of concern to them – school safety, for example, or the steps that were taken to end hunger in the country's schools – what measures were being taken to give children and adolescents easy access to confidential complaints mechanisms, what was being done to hold to account the digital platforms that facilitated violations of children's rights, whether the reported abuses at the Acosta Ñu military school had been investigated and, if so, what the outcome of the investigation had been. He would also like to know what measures had been taken in response to a case of abuse against the backdrop of a peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, he wondered what steps the Government took to exercise authority beyond its ordinary national jurisdiction and whether it intended to close the legal loopholes that made it possible for 16- and 17-year-olds to marry.

24. It would be helpful to learn what plans had been made to ensure that action was taken in follow-up to the recommendations made by the national mechanism for the prevention of torture. It would be interesting to learn, too, what measures would be taken if the commendable prohibition of conversion therapy was ignored. He would welcome a comment on the public outreach efforts that were made in an attempt to combat corporal punishment and put an end to the discrimination and particular forms of ill-treatment to which lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex children were often subjected.

25. **Ms. Correa** (Country Task Force) said that she would like to know what public policy had been formulated to ensure that children and adolescents could exercise their right to freedom from discrimination and what action was being taken within the framework of the policy. It would be interesting to know, for example, what strategies had been devised to ensure that children and adolescents who were vulnerable to discrimination were not forced to leave their homes. She wished to know what benefits other than cash transfers families in need were entitled to and what plans and programmes had been developed to promote co-parenting and child-rearing free from violence. She wondered, too, whether the authorities had access to statistical information on the make-up of the average Paraguayan family.

26. She wished to know why legislative amendments that would expedite the process of transferring children out of institutional homes had been delayed, what was being done for the children who had been taken into care, how many institutional homes had experienced drops in the number of newly admitted children and why children were placed in such institutions. It would be interesting to know how many institutional homes the country had, how many children they accommodated, exactly what form they took and whether the children in those homes had access to complaints mechanisms. It would also be helpful to know what measures were taken to encourage formal rather than informal adoption and whether the Public Defence Service coordinated with other public agencies to ensure the comprehensive protection of the children whose parents were deprived of their liberty. In addition, she asked how often positive parenting workshops were organized and whether the organization of those workshops was part of a coherent strategy or simply an occasional activity.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

27. **A representative of Paraguay**, noting that some of the reports that the Committee had received about his country were inaccurate, said that, although there was still progress to be made, legislative steps, in particular the adoption of Act No. 5419/15, had been taken to prevent child marriage.

28. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, in recent years, considerable efforts had been made with a view to closing the loopholes that made it possible for children 16 and older to skirt the prohibition on child marriage. Those efforts had culminated in the preparation of a bill that would be submitted to Congress in the coming days. If it was made law, there would no longer be any exceptions to the minimum age for marriage, which was 18.

29. **A representative of Paraguay** said that a parliamentary group on which the Ministry for Children and Adolescents, the Public Defence Service and civil society were represented worked on legislative matters of concern to children and adolescents, whose views the group made certain to solicit. There was considerable hope that the 2015 amendments that made it possible for some children to marry would be repealed during the current legislative period.

30. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, until 2015, girls as young as 14 could marry, so, although the current situation was still unsatisfactory, progress towards the elimination of child marriage had been made, and it was likely that there would be more such progress. The efforts to that end would be led by the Public Defence Service.

31. Two 5-year plans had been adopted for the implementation of the National Policy for Children and Adolescents 2014–2024. The second of the two plans had been reworked by the previous Administration in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, including lawmakers, children and adolescents, civil society organizations, family groups and faith-based organizations. The process, which had taken more than a year, had been interrupted by the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In no way could the formulation or reformulation of that plan, which had been informed by a rights perspective, be said to have unfolded in a manner incompatible with children’s right to express their views on matters of concern to them.

32. Work on a new national policy for children and adolescents, which would involve broad-based consultation, was set to begin in September 2024. Like the expiring policy, it would be informed by a rights perspective, but it would also emphasize the family, which, as stated in the Constitution, was the foundation of society. What made the country’s people Paraguayan was the importance they attached to the bonds of family.

33. Men and women and girls and boys had equal rights and equal opportunities in Paraguay. The authorities found no fault with the use of the word “gender” or an emphasis on gender issues in legal, policy or other instruments intended to promote and protect the constitutional right to equal rights and opportunities.

34. The State’s investment in children included central government spending in areas such as health, education and social protection and spending by municipalities and departmental governments. According to a report by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, the proportion of government expenditure on children was increasing. The Government recognized that the well-being of children and adolescents was a priority. Congress had

recently adopted the Zero Hunger in Schools Act, which entailed significant investment, as it was unacceptable for children to go hungry in school in Paraguay, a major food exporter. The increased revenues from electricity exports would be used to fund social spending, and early childhood development was the top priority. Accordingly, the Government was working on an ambitious programme to build early childhood centres throughout the country. The centres would provide care for children between the ages of 6 months and 4 years, preparing them for formal education. As not all children would be able to attend such a centre, a community approach, in which educators visited families at home to provide guidance on child-rearing and other services, would be taken. The Government had decided to maintain taxation at its current level in order to continue to attract investment. Low tax rates did not preclude the implementation of constructive social policies.

35. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the right of petition was enshrined in the Constitution. There was nothing to prevent children from petitioning the authorities.

36. The Public Defence Service had been working with other institutions to develop a simple complaints mechanism for children that did not require the involvement of an adult. It had also set up the 133 helpline for children and adolescents, and its official website included a communication channel through which children could converse with an operator. As a matter of policy, the Public Defence Service always listened to children and adolescents, took their complaints seriously and acted without exposing them to risk. The Service's mandate included receiving and referring complaints by children and adolescents and representing them before the courts.

37. **A representative of Paraguay** said that children could also report rights violations or offences by calling the 147 helpline of the Ministry for Children and Adolescents or by calling the police on 911.

38. **A representative of Paraguay** said that Act No. 6486/2020 on the Promotion and Protection of the Right of Children and Adolescents to Live in a Family, which regulated alternative care and adoption, made it compulsory for care institutions to establish complaints mechanisms. In 2021, the Ministry for Children and Adolescents had adopted a protocol on complaints mechanisms in alternative care settings. In addition to the Ministry's 147 helpline, children could send complaints to an email address that had been widely disseminated. The Ministry had a specialized department, the Directorate General for Alternative Care, that conducted regular inspections of care institutions.

39. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the technical training institute of the Ministry for Children and Adolescents disseminated information on Convention rights. Information was also disseminated through the National System for the Comprehensive Protection and Advancement of Children and Adolescents, which was composed of various actors, including government ministries, departmental and municipal councils for children and adolescents and the Municipal Advisory Services on the Rights of Children and Adolescents. The Government was working to increase the resources available to local actors in the National System and to increase their professionalism, notably by introducing a system of certification for the Municipal Advisory Offices.

40. Paraguay was a democratic country in which people and groups were free to express their views. The Government recognized its role as the custodian of the rights enshrined in the country's legal order and would not allow them to be rolled back.

41. The Government was aware of the problem of child labour in value chains and was taking steps to address it. For example, under the Abrazo Programme, protection centres for children had been established in areas and communities where they were at risk of child labour. Efforts were being made to combat child labour in rural areas and to tackle one of the worst forms of child labour – namely, *criadazgo*. A list of hazardous forms of child labour had been established by decree, while permitted forms of adolescent labour were regulated by the Code on Children and Adolescents. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security had established partnerships with the private sector to help young people enter the labour market.

42. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, unfortunately, Congress had not passed a bill that would have outlawed the deep-rooted practice of *criadazgo*. However, a group of

deputies, recognizing that the passage of such a law was a legislative priority, had committed to preparing a new bill, which was currently being drafted by an inter-agency working group in cooperation with the Ministry for Children and Adolescents. It was expected that the draft would soon be ready to be put to parliamentary debate and that consultations would be held with civil society, including children and adolescents.

43. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, under article 46 of the Constitution, everyone was equal in dignity and rights, no discrimination was permitted and the State must eliminate the causes of discrimination. The Constitution also enshrined the equal rights and opportunities of men and women. Despite that sound legal basis, the Government acknowledged a debt towards the country's approximately 150,000 Indigenous persons and was working on an inter-agency action plan to address the problems they faced.

44. The State ensured full compliance with the principle that, in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child were a primary consideration, in accordance with the Constitution and the Convention. He was not familiar with any judicial rulings whose wording did not focus on children's best interests. While there might be individual cases in which the principle had not been respected, in general judges received training in the best interests of the child, and the principle informed both their judgments and the application of procedural safeguards.

45. **A representative of Paraguay** said that both the judiciary and the Public Defence Service provided training on the application of the principle of the best interests of the child. When defending or representing a child or adolescent, the Public Defence Service would appeal against any measures or decisions it deemed contrary to the principle. In other words, public defenders would draw attention to situations in which judges failed to take account of the child's perspective and would fight for the child's best interests. The institutions that made up the justice system constantly strived to improve the practical application of the principle.

46. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the pandemic had contributed to the low rate of birth registration in 2021. However, the Public Defence Service had taken some measures to facilitate late birth registration.

47. Article 56 of the Civil Registry Act provided that registry officials must not enter a name in the register that could expose the child to ridicule. The article did not deprive Indigenous parents of their right to register a child under a name of their choice. Children born to Indigenous parents received an identity card stating their ethnicity and name, which was subsequently entered into the civil register.

48. The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions had recently accredited the Ombudsman's Office with A status. Accreditation was an important achievement that reflected the efforts undertaken by the State. The Ombudsman's Office worked with the Public Defence Service and had a children's department that addressed possible violations of their human rights.

49. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the Public Defence Service worked to implement the recommendations of the national preventive mechanism concerning children and adolescents in conflict with the law. In 2022, the Service had established a mechanism for responding to complaints of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Since 2019, the Service had referred 34 complaints to the Public Prosecution Service for investigation.

50. **A representative of Paraguay** said that there had been eight reported deaths of adolescents deprived of their liberty in juvenile education centres. Prosecutions had been brought and convictions secured in six of the cases. To prevent such deaths, the Adolescent Offenders Welfare Service of the Ministry of Justice was implementing a restorative justice policy, which had reduced the number of adolescents deprived of their liberty. Between 2018 and 2023, the number of adolescents living in education centres had fallen from 1,180 to 559, while the number who benefited from alternatives to detention had risen. Thanks to various security measures, infrastructure improvements, better food and the training of officials, the situation in education centres had improved and no deaths in custody had been reported since 2017.

51. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** said that he would like to know more about the resources of the Directorate General for Alternative Care. He wondered, for example, how many specialized teams it had and how they were distributed.

52. Although he appreciated the Government's respect for freedom of expression, he was concerned that the expression of some opinions could amount to hate speech. For example, a video had emerged in which the Minister of Agriculture, while on a visit to an agricultural school, had publicly stated that he thought homosexual children should not be allowed to attend the school and should be expelled. The Committee would be grateful for information on measures taken by the authorities to address that matter and other instances of hate speech and anti-rights discourse. Lastly, welcoming the State party's prioritization of the family in its public policies, he said that the Convention, too, was pro-family, and recognized in its preamble that children should grow up in a family environment.

53. **Ms. Correa**, noting that the State party had introduced complaints mechanisms in care institutions, said that she would be interested to know how many complaints had been submitted and what their outcomes had been.

54. **Ms. Todorova** said that she wished to remind the delegation of the importance of providing the Committee with specific figures on the budget allocated to children and adolescents. The Committee would also appreciate information on any legislation that had been enacted to combat discrimination and hate speech.

55. **Ms. Beloff**, recalling that the Inter-American Court of Human Rights had issued several judgments against Paraguay, including three judgments on the situation of Indigenous Peoples, said that she wished to know what difficulties had prevented the State party from effectively implementing such court judgments – and, indeed, the recommendations of the human rights treaty bodies – and thus making a positive impact on the lives of children.

56. **Ms. Aho** said that she would be interested to know what percentage of births in Paraguay, including births of Indigenous children, were currently registered. She wondered what steps had been taken to raise public awareness of the importance of birth registration. It would be useful to know, too, how many children were registered, how many birth certificates were issued and what mechanisms had been put in place to make civil registry services more accessible, including in remote areas.

57. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** said that clear legal provisions on non-discrimination, such as those contained in the Constitution, might be insufficient to prevent de facto discrimination. She therefore wished to know what practical measures the State party had taken to combat discrimination, particularly against the most vulnerable groups. In addition, she would be interested to know whether the State party had devised a comprehensive strategy – which might include the publication of guidance and the provision of training for justice officials – to ensure that, in all actions concerning children, the courts made the best interests of the child a primary consideration. She would also appreciate more information regarding the action taken by the authorities following the deaths that had occurred in juvenile education centres, including the findings of any investigations that had been conducted.

58. **Mr. Mezmur** said that he wished to know how the State party planned to meet the ongoing challenge of detecting intellectual and psychosocial disabilities and providing assistance to children with such disabilities. He would be particularly interested to know what action had been taken on behalf of Indigenous children with disabilities. He wondered whether the Government was concerned about the centralization of services in segregated care centres and, if so, whether it envisaged the decentralization of services to make them more accessible to children with disabilities, particularly children living in rural areas. While the Committee welcomed the establishment of disability secretariats in departmental and municipal governments, it would be useful to know what the secretariats' impact had been in terms of the participation and inclusion of children with disabilities. He would be interested to know, too, whether the services provided by the National Secretariat for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities might be decentralized in order to make them more accessible. Furthermore, he wondered whether the State party had encountered problems with information management and whether it planned to develop a system for the collection of disaggregated data on persons with disabilities, including children.

59. As the pandemic might have reversed public health gains, he wished to know what measures had been taken to arrest negative health trends and ensure continued improvement in indicators such as the maternal mortality ratio. He would also be keen to know whether the country's vaccination coverage for communicable diseases had improved since the pandemic and whether immunization efforts had been undermined by disinformation.

60. Given the links between the sexual exploitation and abuse of girls and teenage pregnancy, he would appreciate updated information on measures to tackle teenage pregnancy, especially in relation to violence against girls. Furthermore, he wondered whether reports that the incidence of HIV/AIDS had increased among 15- to 19-year-olds since 2021 were accurate and what steps had been taken to reduce the incidence in that age group. The delegation might also describe measures to address the reportedly high rates of injury and mortality caused by traffic accidents among 10- to 19-year-olds. He would also like to know whether the Government was tackling the widespread use of illicit substances, particularly marijuana, among adolescents.

61. He would be interested to know whether the Government had assessed the impact of air, water and soil pollution on children's health and whether it had evaluated the impact of pesticide use. He would like to know, too, to what extent climate policies were centred on children and whether their views were taken into account during planning and implementation of environmental measures.

62. As a large number of children were reportedly excluded from education, he would be grateful for information on measures to address the problem, especially among 3- to 5-year-olds and 15- to 17-year-olds, Indigenous children and children of African descent. He would like to know how the Government intended to ensure that the expansion of preschool education took place in an even manner. Lastly, he would appreciate a detailed breakdown of the budget for the National Education Plan 2024, including at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels.

63. **Ms. Correa**, noting that the National Drinking Water and Sanitation Plan adopted in 2023 envisaged sustainable access to water and sanitation for all, said that she would welcome information regarding the Plan's likely impact on the Indigenous population, including children and adolescents. She wished to know, too, whether the Government's policy on food security benefited all children without discrimination.

64. The Committee appreciated the State party's efforts in hosting Venezuelan refugees and the adoption of policies and procedures so that children and adolescents and their families could obtain international protection. Nevertheless, the delegation might explain how the State party's rules were applied in practice, where children stayed during the processing of their asylum applications and whether the State party maintained statistics on migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking children.

65. She wondered what the outcome of the measures taken by the National Institute for Indigenous Affairs and other entities to prevent the eviction of Indigenous communities from their land had been. Had the State party developed a strategy for the demarcation and protection of ancestral territories so as to prevent future conflicts? If so, how did the State party uphold the rights of Indigenous children living in such territories?

66. As the most recent data on child labour dated from several years previously, she said that she wished to know whether the State party planned to conduct a new survey in order to inform the policies and programmes it adopted to combat the labour exploitation of children. She would be interested to know how the labour inspectorate functioned, how it prosecuted cases of dangerous work involving children and what results it had obtained, including in respect of the settlement of labour disputes involving adolescents. She would welcome information on measures taken to eradicate child labour in agriculture and on programmes adopted in line with the National Strategy for the Prevention of Forced Labour 2016–2020. Furthermore, she wished to know how the State party prevented, detected and measured the practice of *criadazgo*, how it rescued victims and how it ensured that teachers and education professionals were not involved in placing children in situations of *criadazgo*. To what extent had the Government engaged with civil society to combat the practice? What steps had it taken to protect the right to identity of children forced into *criadazgo*?

67. The Committee would appreciate statistics on children in street situations and information on measures taken to address the problem. It would be helpful to learn what was being done to prevent situations in which children were living on the street with adult relatives. Furthermore, she wished to know how the State party identified child victims of sexual exploitation and how it defined and investigated offences related to sexual exploitation, including online child sexual exploitation and child sex tourism. In the light of reports of child sex tourism involving Indigenous children, she wished to know how many complaints the authorities had received and what their outcomes had been. The delegation might also explain what laws and policies were in place to prevent children from being illegally taken out of the country, whether by trafficking or international child abduction, and whether the State party had specialized shelters for victims of such offences.

68. She would be interested to know what steps the judiciary took to protect child victims and witnesses and prevent their revictimization during proceedings. She wondered what further measures the State party might take to uphold the right of children and adolescents, including Indigenous children and children belonging to other minorities, to effective judicial remedies.

69. Lastly, in respect of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, she wished to know whether the Government considered the forced recruitment of children to be a problem, whether it investigated and maintained statistics on cases of forced recruitment and whether it had taken steps to prevent and prohibit it. She would be interested to know whether students at the Acosta Ñu military school were considered members of the armed forces and whether the school taught a secondary education curriculum or mainly provided military training. She wondered whether corporal punishment was permitted and whether students could complain about such treatment. The delegation might also comment on allegations that the military recruited children.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.