



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Summary record of the 2805th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 17 May 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Skelton

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

Consideration of reports of States parties *(continued)*

Combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of Paraguay (continued)
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1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Paraguay joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair** invited the delegation to provide responses to the questions raised by Committee members at the previous meeting.
3. **A representative of Paraguay** said that a priority area of work for the parliamentary group for the rights of children and adolescents was developing a tool to measure the implementation and impact of legislation. Children and adolescents were involved in the development of the tool, which would be supported by a budget.
4. Article 192 of the Constitution established the capacity of Congress to request reports on issues of public interest, including from the executive and judicial authorities; the reports should be provided within a two-week time frame. Both chambers of Congress made regular requests for such reports, which helped make it possible to monitor the implementation of the law and of executive and institutional action. Approximately 19 requests for reports had been made over the previous six weeks on a range of issues that included children's rights.
5. **A representative of Paraguay** said that no ground was being ceded on the protection and promotion of the rights of children; in fact, the Government was engaged in a historic strengthening of public policy on those rights. Under the Constitution and the General Education Act, the Ministry of Education and Science was responsible for the education system and setting education policy, which guaranteed access to quality education for all and was developed in dialogue with all stakeholders, including the educational community.
6. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, for the 2022 national population and housing census, a question had been added requesting identity card numbers as a low-cost measure that would improve the interoperability of databases and make it easier to disaggregate and mine data for statistics. The questions used in the census were based on those recommended by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Statistics Division. The question on identity cards, which would help provide a more accurate picture of the country's population, would make it possible to refine public policies, including measures on disability. The National Institute of Statistics and the disability secretariats had launched a joint project to obtain more information about persons with disabilities in an effort to better respond to their needs and raise awareness of that group across the public sector. The project was intended to provide reliable statistics to support the design and implementation of public policy.
7. **A representative of Paraguay** said that restorative justice programmes provided training and education for social reintegration. The Office for Restorative Juvenile Justice had dealt with the cases of 28 adolescents. Alternatives to criminal proceedings and detention included abridged legal processes and measures to ensure that minors received minimal criminal sanctions. Restorative justice sanctions could involve the preparation and sale of food in the community or work on cultural projects. Educational and other activities were provided to change mindsets and develop the offenders' capacities. The technical unit to support children and adolescents had set priorities for the restorative justice programme and measured its impact using goals and targets. A working group had been established to revise the protocol on intensive therapy with input from the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare.
8. Training on restorative justice was provided at the local level to judges of the lower courts that tried cases involving children and adolescents, and inter-agency dialogue ensured that the system was child- and adolescent-friendly. Efforts were also under way to consider alternatives in the context of children's right to live in a family setting, and to streamline judicial processes. Never had there been more restorative justice measures involving children and adolescents than in 2023.

9. **A representative of Paraguay** said that specialized public defenders represented children and adolescents in legal proceedings and that technical advisers were available to support parents and guardians involved in trials that concerned their children. In 2023, there had been more than 45,000 cases that had directly involved potential violations of children's or adolescents' rights.

10. **A representative of Paraguay** said that State institutions, including ministries, regularly worked with civil society organizations, which contributed to policy-setting and implementation. Their participation in campaigns and projects in areas such as the eradication of trafficking in children, for which they received financial support from the relevant ministries, was essential. It was also a means of increasing the legitimacy of government action.

11. A review of the participation of civil society organizations in the work of the National Council for Children and Adolescents was under way. Although the rules of procedure of the National Council referred to annual elections, those elections did not take place. It was unclear how particular civil society organizations, many of which had been represented on the Council for years, were chosen. They had therefore been requested to re-register with the Council for an election that would be monitored by the electoral oversight body. The term of office for civil society members of the National Council would be brought into line with the presidential term of five years.

12. Statistics on missing children and adolescents were not always reliable, since action was sometimes not taken in follow-up to cases in which children returned home or were found within a few hours of their being reported missing, resulting in partial reporting and erroneous statistics. Efforts were being made to improve the statistics, including the preparation of a bill on missing and disappeared persons that was currently before the Senate and work on an early alert system for a rapid coordinated response that was based on a tool developed by the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children.

13. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, in addition to international agreements, domestic laws and codes were in place to identify and mitigate the use of harmful pesticides and agricultural chemicals, including a 1993 law on environmental impact that had been updated in 2003 and applied to any entity or agricultural activity in the State party. An environmental impact tool served as a preventive strategy, and decisions could be appealed to the environmental authorities. All projects were considered using a digital platform that enhanced traceability and made the location of planned activities clear. A resolution adopted in 2023 governed the identification of incompatible activities in rural and territorial development programmes. A protocol on protection from the risks posed by pesticides at educational institutions had been set out in a resolution adopted in 2023.

14. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the principles of the National Plan for Children and Adolescents 2020–2024, copies of which would be distributed to Committee members in due course, included the participation of children and adolescents in matters of concern to them, inclusion and non-discrimination. In keeping with the principle of the gradual development of children's autonomy and rights, participation should be appropriate to their maturity level and development, and they should be able to find and circulate information.

15. The approach taken in the National Plan recognized individuals as rights-holders who should be protected by the State from the moment of conception. It referred to children's best interests and the promotion of children's development by making the most of their inherent abilities. The National Plan also defined the term "interculturality", which was a concept developed to reflect the country's bilingual, multicultural nature and discourage considering one culture superior to another. The aim was to prevent differences, which should be viewed as a resource, from becoming grounds for discrimination.

16. **A representative of Paraguay** said that a student task force met monthly at the Ministry of Education and Science to tackle issues in education policy and included youth representatives and representatives from student organizations. The resolution on searching backpacks in schools had been replaced by a resolution on guidelines for building safe schools that focused on action in the classroom and the community to tackle social risks.

17. **A representative of Paraguay** said that groups of young people had staged protests amid fears that the funding used to provide free public transport for university students might be cut. The President had subsequently engaged directly with the groups, established safeguards to protect the funding and set up a ministerial working group.

18. The domestic legal arsenal contained legislation on the ill-treatment of children, child protection and the prevention of sexual abuse of children. The National Council for Children and Adolescents had approved an inter-agency road map for the provision of comprehensive support in child sexual abuse cases. For ease of reference, the 42-page document had been condensed into an easy-to-understand flow chart explaining, inter alia, where and by whom suspected cases of child sexual abuse could be reported and which agencies could provide support in the areas of health, child protection and access to justice.

19. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the aim of the road map was to ensure coordination among the relevant State agencies, including the Public Defence Service, and avoid revictimization. The Ministry of Education and Science also had its own internal protocol in place for handling cases of child abuse.

20. **A representative of Paraguay** said that efforts were being made to address weaknesses in the prevention of sexual abuse. An informational campaign involving public and private entities, departmental governments, the media and civil society organizations had been running for a number of years with the aim of encouraging people to view abusers as criminals. The campaign, which had been launched by the President and the First Lady personally and rolled out on television and radio and online, was focused on prevention. The authorities had also produced a guide, divided into three sections suitable for different age groups, to help public officials and parents prevent child sexual abuse, including online abuse, and had organized talks on preventing sexual abuse and exploitation, bullying and domestic violence.

21. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation had provided funding for efforts to prevent child sexual exploitation and to identify and handle cases that did arise. Local technical teams would be deployed in each of the country's 17 departments to produce audiovisual materials and deliver training in schools.

22. The first fully State-run shelter for victims of trafficking in persons was being set up. The Public Prosecution Service had a number of specialized units for trafficking cases and was working closely with the Ministry of the Interior and the police to establish more.

23. Pursuant to Act No. 5653/2016, an observatory had been set up to monitor online content that might be harmful to children. The four largest Internet service providers and more than a hundred smaller providers operated a filtering system designed to protect children from such content. A bill was being drafted with the aim of promoting and protecting children's rights in cyberspace.

24. **A representative of Paraguay** said that Paraguay had ratified the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and that the Public Prosecution Service cooperated with other agencies using the established channels for extraterritorial criminal prosecution.

25. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the Ministry of Justice had incorporated the recommendations of the national mechanism for the prevention of torture into the training provided to its officials. Some sections of juvenile detention centres had been converted into classrooms and workshops. Following complaints of ill-treatment in correctional facilities, the officials involved had been fired to ensure that they were no longer part of the juvenile detention system. Where appropriate, criminal charges had been filed.

26. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, while no specific mechanisms were in place to monitor the implementation of the Mental Health Act of 2022, including article 3 (c) thereof, the Government was examining ways of evaluating the effectiveness of legislation.

27. **A representative of Paraguay** said that non-discrimination was one of the guiding principles of the National Plan for Children and Adolescents. That principle was also set out in the Constitution and informed all laws, policies, plans, programmes and projects. The Government therefore did not consider it necessary to adopt separate pieces of

anti-discrimination legislation for each minority group. The authorities were making great efforts to ensure that the central Government and the departmental governments coordinated the steps they took, including by providing financial and technical assistance and training to departmental entities. Children's rights cut across all areas, including education, health and housing.

28. Article 49 of the Constitution established that the definition of the family was rooted in the union between a man and a woman, their children and the surrounding community. According to data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, in 2022, 34 per cent of households in Paraguay had been headed by women. Such households received support from State social programmes as appropriate.

29. The Supreme Court, the Public Defence Service, the Public Prosecution Service and the Ministry for Children and Adolescents were working with civil society and other agencies to resolve the situation of children living in institutional settings. The number of such children had been reduced from approximately 1,200 to 783. Of the 35 care homes for children in Paraguay, 18 had been converted into residential homes, 8 were in the process of being converted and 9 were still classified as institutions. The majority of the care homes were privately run, with just 12 of them receiving public funding. Although Act No. 6486/2020 had established a one-year time frame for care homes to be converted from institutions to residential settings, it had been determined that more time was required to complete the process.

30. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the Senate was considering a bill that would amend article 116 of Act No. 6486/2020 to extend the time frame for deinstitutionalization. Once the bill had passed the Senate, a public consultation process would be held.

31. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that he would be interested to hear about the plans that were in place to transfer to the State the work done by the Good Shepherd Sisters, which was currently the only service provider for victims of trafficking in persons. He wondered how many prison officials had been fired for ill-treatment. He would welcome the delegation's comments on the measures being taken to respond to the concerns of the Special Rapporteur on hazardous substances and wastes regarding the use of pesticides near communities and schools.

32. **Ms. Correa** (Country Task Force) said that she wished to know to what extent civil society was involved in the child protection system, including the running of care homes, and what independent monitoring mechanism was in place. More information about the planned amendments to article 116 of Act No. 6486/2020 would be welcome, as would information about the conduct of any rigorous study on the composition and situation of families in Paraguay.

33. **Ms. Beloff** said that it would be useful to better understand how the State party interpreted the concept of restorative justice and what plans there might be to amend Act No. 1680/01, which appeared to be preventing justice officials from treating juvenile offenders differently.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 11.45 a.m.

34. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the instrument of ratification of the Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance would be deposited shortly. A number of changes with regard to alternative care and adoption had been ushered in with the promulgation of Act No. 6486/2020. For instance, all prospective adoptive parents had to go through the Adoption Centre rather than appear directly before a judge, thus ensuring fuller background checks and greater compliance with procedure. The Adoption Centre was composed of representatives of the Public Prosecution Service, the Office of the Public Defender for Children and Adolescents, the Ministry for Children and Adolescents and civil society. Furthermore, in serious or emergency situations, the Office of the Public Defender could take legal action within 24 hours to keep children from remaining unprotected and ensure that they were reunited with their immediate or extended family or, where that was not feasible, that they were placed in alternative care under the supervision of the Ministry. The primary goal was to strengthen the ability of families to care for their children.

35. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the Directorate General for Alternative Care of the Ministry for Children and Adolescents inspected all care homes. A digital platform had recently been created to track the status of all children placed in alternative care.

36. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the policy of keeping children with their parents or parent wherever possible also applied to the children of persons deprived of their liberty. Children could remain with their incarcerated mother until the age of 4. Services provided to children in that situation, of whom there were currently 34, included medical care, early childhood education and programmes to strengthen the bond between mother and child. While every effort was made to preserve the parental authority of persons convicted of criminal offences, there were situations in which that was not possible and custodial measures had to be enforced. Nevertheless, only 1 per cent of the children of persons imprisoned in 2023 had had to be placed in alternative care.

37. **A representative of Paraguay** said that efforts were under way to implement the education component of Act No. 5659/2016, on the promotion of good treatment and positive parenting. Those efforts included nationwide campaigns led by local protection officials with a view to preventing all types of violence and ill-treatment and strengthening the role of the family as primary protector and caregiver.

38. The Directorate General for Alternative Care was a centralized body composed of nearly 50 technical staff members. Its two psychosocial teams worked out of the capital but also covered neighbouring departments to the south-east, where much of the population lived.

39. Alternative care and adoption had been identified by the Government as a top issue. While the aim of Act No. 6486/2020 had been to simplify and speed up procedures and guarantee the best interests of the child while prioritizing the right to live in the family, those aims had remained little more than good intentions because there had been no budget provision for them. He had raised the matter with the President and, in coordination with Congress, had managed to obtain a larger allocation for strengthening alternative care and adoption procedures. The measures approved very recently had included the opening of a competitive recruitment process for 80 members of staff, the idea being to expand the services of the Directorate General to a total of 11 departments.

40. The launch of a national alternative care and adoption programme that would offset some of the deficiencies in the current legal framework was expected in the coming months. The Directorate General currently lacked capacity, but with the additional funds and staff, services would be not only decentralized but also expanded in scope to include identification and training of potential foster families and provision of financial support to families that temporarily hosted children. The extra funding might subsequently also be used to support families and thus avoid separating children from their families in the first place.

41. Strengthening families through a range of social programmes was also a way of combating child labour. One of the flagship programmes in that area was the “Living Better” programme of the Ministry of Social Development, through which conditional cash transfers to families directly benefited nearly 263,600 children, including some 41,500 Indigenous children. In addition, 12,000 children received protection under a programme to combat child labour exploitation, while a poverty-reduction programme of the Cabinet Council on Social Affairs was in place in priority districts.

42. In 2023, the Ministry for Children and Adolescents had issued a decision outlining a complaints protocol for alternative care institutions. Two care homes had been closed, one due to reports of violence, which had led to criminal charges, and the other due to non-compliance with administrative requirements.

43. Immediately after the Minister of Agriculture had made the statement about expelling homosexual children from the agricultural school, the Office of the President had posted on its official social media account a comment to the effect that the Minister’s statement in no way represented the position of the Government, which worked for the well-being of all Paraguayans in keeping with the principles of equality and non-discrimination enshrined in the Constitution. A number of other government entities had similarly disassociated themselves from the statement.

44. **A representative of Paraguay** said that one of the two care homes that had been shut down had housed 13 children, most of whom had been placed there without a court order and had thus been in a completely irregular situation. Joint action by the Public Defence Service and the Public Prosecution Service had been taken to investigate the case, adopt measures to protect the children and regularize their situation.

45. **A representative of Paraguay**, noting that there were some 1,720,000 children in Paraguay, more than half of whom were under age 9, said that the Government allocated 12.3 per cent of the national budget to measures for children, or the equivalent of 4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). While the largest share of expenditures was in the area of early childhood, substantial increases had been made at the various levels of education and in the areas of health, water supply and protection.

46. The main difficulty in implementing international decisions and recommendations concerning Paraguay was the lack of funds. The Government was nonetheless intent on doing its utmost to comply. For example, 98 per cent of the requirements of the settlement in the case *Cristina Aguayo Ortiz et al. v. Paraguay* had been fulfilled.

47. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, despite insufficient resources, the State was building its institutional capacity – for instance, by making some departments ministries and by establishing the Inter-Agency Commission for the Enforcement of International Judgments. Initially established with the inter-American system in mind and headed by the Attorney General, the Inter-Agency Commission, which was now overseen by the Office of the Vice-President, dealt with decisions taken by the human rights treaty bodies in individual communications. The coordination efforts were bearing fruit, as illustrated by a visit to Indigenous communities the previous week to provide comprehensive documentation services. There was also a mechanism for follow-up to international human rights recommendations.

48. **A representative of Paraguay** said that there were over 520 civil registry offices nationwide, of which 25 were located in hospitals. Many more offices would be set up in the interior of the country. Nearly 100,000 children had been registered in 2023. The Directorate General of the Civil Registry had established a unified register that enabled online birth registration. Its implementation in hospital-based civil registry offices would improve efficiency, access to information and the issuance of documentation. The unified register was currently available at 18 offices around the country.

49. Steps taken to improve access to civil registry offices in rural areas had included the creation of mobile units, the organization of registration fairs in border areas and Indigenous communities, the holding of 105 information sessions under the National Courthouse Programme between 2020 and 2023 and the signing of agreements by the Public Defence Service, the Ministry of Health, municipalities and universities. The Directorate had set up three offices dedicated to the Indigenous community, which also conducted registration sessions in the field.

50. **A representative of Paraguay** said that there were plans to include registry officials in the early childhood centres to be established throughout the country.

51. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, pursuant to Act No. 6808/2021, 57 Secretariats for Disability had been established at the municipal level and 8 at the departmental level. Furthermore, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare had embarked on a decentralization process to enable Family Health Units to provide care to persons with disabilities. The data on children with disabilities that would thus be collected, which would help make disability issues more visible, would enhance decision- and policymaking. The National Secretariat for the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Institute of Indigenous Affairs were coordinating their activities in respect of Indigenous children with disabilities.

52. There were no dedicated care centres for children with psychosocial disabilities. However, the National Institute of Statistics and the National Secretariat for the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities, with support from the Inter-American Development Bank, were working on an atlas of disability rights with the chief aim of shining a spotlight on gaps in the disability sector and thus designing better policies. The first phase of the

project was to define indicators; an online platform to collect data from various actors, including a number of cabinet ministries, would be set up thereafter.

53. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the reduction in the maternal mortality rate, which had been 93 per 100,000 live births in 2023 compared to 81 per 100,000 live births in 2021, had stagnated in recent years. Although the midterm evaluation of the National Plan on Reproductive and Sexual Health had been positive, implementation had been thrown somewhat off course by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. To get efforts to reduce maternal, fetal and infant mortality back on course, a comprehensive care model, which contained tools to improve women's access to health care by making it a public health matter, had been adopted, as had the Maternal, Fetal and Infant Mortality Reduction Plan 2023–2030. The Plan included provisions for implementation indicators, resource and technology optimization measures, training for health-care practitioners and guidelines for families and communities.

54. The purchase of vaccines for the expanded immunization programme was established by law as a priority in the national budget. The effects of any misinformation were thus mitigated. Poliomyelitis and yellow fever, among other diseases, had been eradicated thanks to the immunization programme, which provided for free services and epidemiological surveillance, as well as funding for, inter alia, infrastructure, including the cold chain, computer hardware and information campaigns to foster a culture of prevention. Investment in the expanded immunization programme had risen between 2015 and 2024, with a spike in 2021 and 2022 to ensure access to the COVID-19 vaccine. That growing investment had been accompanied by robust awareness-raising efforts by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare and other relevant institutions. Although an initiative to exclude the COVID-19 vaccine from the programme had recently been put forward in Congress, it had garnered no support.

55. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, under the Comprehensive National Early Childhood Programme, paediatric health services would be scaled up.

56. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the number of teenage pregnancies had fallen from over 12,350 in 2022 to 9,225 in 2023. In a bid to maintain that downward trend, 4,200 health-care professionals had received training in the prevention and handling of gender-based violence, which, as had been noted, was linked to teenage pregnancy. The protocol for the medical response to such violence had been updated in 2021 to bring it into line with laws on the protection of women from all forms of violence and on preventing sexual abuse of children. The protocol provided for coordination with other relevant institutions to ensure comprehensive care as a form of reparation for survivors of gender-based violence.

57. **A representative of Paraguay** said that road accidents, particularly motorcycle accidents, were one of the leading causes of death among young people. To address the problem, which not only endangered young people but also put the health-care system under considerable strain, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Public Works, together with the Municipal Cooperation Organization, were conducting broad awareness campaigns. Measures in the area of adolescent health had included the adoption of the National Adolescent Health Plan, complete with an updated clinical manual and procedures, the distribution to health facilities of an updated adolescent health pamphlet, training for health-care professionals and the establishment of local teen clubs under the Family Health Units.

58. Keeping his campaign promise, the President had led efforts by 22 institutions to develop an action plan to address addiction among young people. The outcome had been a detailed document, including a timeline and a plan for the delegation of responsibilities, that centred on prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration, and the suppression of trafficking. Families and schools would be closely involved in the community-based prevention efforts, and steps would be taken to strengthen and expand both in- and outpatient recovery spaces. A drug rehabilitation centre for adolescents was being established in San Lorenzo. Most importantly, appropriate resources had been set aside for the implementation of the action plan, including through the diversion of assets confiscated from drug trafficking rings and other organized crime networks.

59. **A representative of Paraguay** said that actions taken under the education policy to achieve equality had included the implementation of a bilingual education programme, the near universalization of preschool education, the roll-out of programmes targeting poor urban and rural areas and the introduction of scholarships to encourage retention. In addition, lower secondary education had been added to compulsory education, thus more than doubling the proportion of children ages 12 to 15 enrolled in school. Measures had been adopted in 2023 to help children from 6 to 14 who had either never attended school or were returning after dropping out catch up with their peers. According to the latest available figures, some 37 per cent of public spending on education was allocated to basic education, 17 per cent to lower secondary education, 10 per cent to upper secondary education and nearly 20 per cent to higher education. Total expenditure on education was not limited to the budget for the Ministry of Education and Science but also included allocations to regional and municipal governments, universities and other State entities.

60. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the education budget accounted for nearly 11 per cent of the State budget and over 3.5 per cent of GDP. The allocation for 2023 had been US\$ 138 million higher than that for 2022.

61. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund, the Ministry of Education and Science had developed innovative teaching materials for 18 Indigenous Peoples. There were currently over 660 Indigenous education facilities with more than 31,700 students. Of the 2,460 teachers at Indigenous schools, some 1,310 were Indigenous themselves.

62. **A representative of Paraguay** said that an ambitious bill on water for the Chaco, which was winding its way through Congress, had been prepared with a view to finding a sustainable solution to the water supply problems in that area, which had a diverse Indigenous population. In terms of food security, both the Community Canteen Act and the Zero Hunger in Schools Act provided for monitoring mechanisms.

63. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the refugee status determination procedure lasted three months, during which a child who applied for refugee status remained with his or her parent or parents. Unaccompanied minors who applied for such status were referred either to the Public Defence Service or to the Ministry for Children and Adolescents, although there had only been one such case. There were some 1,050 child refugees, including roughly the same number of girls and boys. Persons with refugee status received a three-year residency permit and an identification document that opened the door to decent employment, education and health services and social security.

64. **A representative of Paraguay** said that Act No. 904/1981 outlined the mechanisms for the granting of land to Indigenous communities, whether it was newly demarcated land or land already registered with the National Institute of Indigenous Affairs. The land was acquired through donation, transfer from public or private entities, purchase of private property or expropriation.

65. Operation Mimbí had led to the identification of 160 Indigenous children and adolescents who were being subjected to labour or sexual exploitation, dealt small quantities of drugs or were addicted to drugs. A number of institutions had been involved in providing support to the children; some of them had been placed in shelters, while others had been reintegrated in the community. Seventy per cent of children in street situations were Indigenous, and nearly all were accompanied by their families. Most children in street situations found themselves in those situations due to a lack of social protection, and it was to provide such protection that poverty-reduction and other programmes had been adopted. More technical staff were being deployed in the streets in problematic areas. Discussions were under way on the development of indicators to measure the extent of the unpaid domestic child labour known as *criadazgo* and on the criminalization of the practice.

66. **A representative of Paraguay** said that over 2,560 labour inspections had been conducted in 2022 and 2023, leading to the discovery of nearly 20 infractions pertaining to child labour. Seventeen cases had been brought before the courts in 2023. A guidance and legal advice helpline had been set up for adolescents.

67. **Mr. Pedernera Reyna** said that much legislative and institutional progress had been achieved in the State party since the 1990s. However, there were reports that some gains in children's rights were being lost. Perhaps the reason was that the Convention called for a change in the dynamic among adults, institutions and children that some found rather uncomfortable. He nonetheless urged the head of delegation, in his capacity as Minister for Children and Adolescents, to lead efforts to improve the lives of children. He also urged the State party to share the concluding observations with children in child-friendly language, thereby involving them in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations.

68. **A representative of Paraguay** said that, of the several interactive dialogues he had attended, the one with the Committee had been the most open. The new Government was fully aware of the challenges that lay ahead and looked forward to receiving the Committee's concluding observations, which the members of the delegation would transmit to their respective institutions.

69. **A representative of Paraguay** said that the importance of the dialogue with the Committee had been evident to the Government, which hoped that its participation would be seen as a sign of the political desire to create a better society for the children of Paraguay.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.