



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child Ninety-seventh session

### Summary record of the 2833rd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 5 September 2024, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Skelton

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*Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Armenia (continued)*

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

**Consideration of reports of States parties** (*continued*)

*Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Armenia (continued) (CRC/C/ARM/5-6; CRC/C/ARM/Q/5-6; CRC/C/ARM/RQ/5-6)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Armenia joined the meeting.*
2. **The Chair** invited the delegation to reply to the questions raised by Committee members at the previous meeting.
3. **A representative of Armenia** said that, in 2023, more than 115,000 ethnic Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh, of whom 30,000 were children, had taken refuge in Armenia. There had been reports of gross rights violations during a nine-month illegal blockade by Azerbaijan, which the international community had failed to prevent. The blocking of international humanitarian aid by Azerbaijan and its refusal to open the Lachin corridor reflected that country's intention to commit atrocities and destroy the Armenian population. Children had suffered from malnutrition and a lack of basic supplies and medicines, and they had been physically and psychologically exhausted upon their entry into Armenia.
4. The blockade and military aggression by Azerbaijan against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020 had also led to serious mass violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The region's authorities and the Armenian Government had drawn the attention of international agencies, including the United Nations and independent experts, to the dangerous situation there. The first victim of that military aggression had been a child. The use of force had a disastrous effect on the inherent right to life of every child, with further impact on the full range of rights enshrined in the Convention. The children of Nagorno-Karabakh had suffered a terrible trauma.
5. The Government and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had called for \$97 million in emergency response funding, but only half that amount had been disbursed. To address the needs of refugees, Armenia had made a number of pledges during the Global Refugee Forum in 2023 and had launched a refugee response programme, focused on ensuring access to quality education and health care, social inclusion and, ultimately, sustainable livelihoods. Floods in the Lorri and Tavush regions in May 2024 had worsened refugees' living conditions and had caused significant damage to housing and infrastructure. The Government and international partners had taken swift action to provide housing to the most vulnerable and repair the damage.
6. Funding for the Human Rights Defender and its territorial subdivisions was an integral part of the State budget. Its funding could not decrease and it tended to rise every year. The Human Rights Defender decided how its budget would be spent, and the protection of children's rights was a priority.
7. **A representative of Armenia** said that 17,000 children and 500 schoolteachers from Nagorno-Karabakh had been incorporated into the Armenian education system. The World Bank had given a grant of almost \$3 million to provide psychosocial support to the refugees, particularly children with special educational needs, which had been delivered through the Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Support Center. Teaching assistants and psychologists were employed at all schools in the country, and more than 200 children with special educational needs were enrolled in inclusive education.
8. **A representative of Armenia** said that internally displaced children received full medical and psychiatric support, with assistance from mobile teams of paediatricians, psychologists and nurses provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
9. **A representative of Armenia** said that measures had been taken to address malnutrition among pregnant women who had lived under the blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh. Cash assistance was provided to families to cover their basic needs, and the Government had launched a project to provide safe, permanent housing for internally displaced persons.
10. Armenia was committed to addressing all forms of trafficking in persons and had a solid track record of cooperation with international monitoring bodies, including the Group

of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the United States Department of State. The Government had welcomed visits by the Group of Experts and had carefully followed its recommendations to enhance national measures on victim protection, the prevention of trafficking and the prosecution of traffickers. She was not aware of Armenia having been categorized as a source or transit country for trafficking in persons. The country remained vigilant in addressing all forms of exploitation and continued to strengthen its legal and institutional frameworks, in collaboration with international partners, to prevent and combat trafficking in persons.

11. The seventh national action plan to prevent trafficking in persons had been launched in 2022, with funding from the State budget. The previous action plan on trafficking had been assessed and the current plan would be in place until 2025. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs provided social protection, including emergency medical assistance, temporary shelter, education, basic necessities and counselling, to trafficking victims to help reintegrate them into society. Additional support was offered to child victims of trafficking, victims with children and victims with mental illness. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs worked with more than 70 certified non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which were required to meet a set of minimum standards and received grants from the State budget. The National Institute of Labour and Social Research had provided training courses to familiarize social workers with the relevant legislation on the provision of care services and the referral mechanisms in place.

12. The country's programmes and measures to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men were in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. A new strategic plan for the implementation of gender policy had been developed for the period 2024–2028, based on the recommendations made following a gender impact assessment by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The plan was being reviewed by the Office of the Prime Minister and adoption was expected in October 2024. The plan would cover the prevention of gender discrimination at all levels of management and decision-making; women's socioeconomic empowerment and reduction of the gender pay gap; prevention of gender discrimination in education; promotion of equal opportunities for men and women in the health sector; prevention of gender-based violence; and development of a gender-sensitive and gender-responsive approach to tackling climate change. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in cooperation with local and international partners, aimed to eliminate the double vulnerability of women, guarantee equal rights and opportunities, promote economic empowerment, improve the quality of life and lay the groundwork for ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

13. Since 2020, important measures had been implemented to protect children in vulnerable situations, including the establishment of support centres, which were operated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs with State funding and offered psychosocial support and legal assistance; the creation of a hotline in each region; the provision of shelter services for victims of domestic violence, which supplied children with educational materials, psychosocial and medical support, and legal aid; and the payment of lump sum compensation to victims of gender-based violence. In July 2024, a centralized case management database had been launched, to provide the Ministry with disaggregated data to help combat domestic violence and assist victims.

14. In April 2024, the Government had introduced legislation to strengthen the child protection system and expand the number of "Safe Corners" in cooperation with UNICEF. "Safe Corners" were care facilities based on the barnahus model and were designed to protect children who had experienced or witnessed violence. Children underwent comprehensive medical and psychological examinations and received support from trained professionals. The referral protocol and the support procedures for children subjected to violence had been specifically established by law and were based on international best practice. The next steps were to establish an anonymous reporting system, improve crisis centre services and expand the barnahus approach to cover the whole country.

15. **A representative of Armenia** said that the Government promoted a healthy and safe environment for children through sustainable development initiatives, environmental education and policies aimed at reduction of carbon emissions. In 2023, Armenia had become

the first country in its region to sign a joint declaration with UNICEF, pledging to ensure that priorities for children and youth were included in climate action. The Government was cooperating with UNICEF to strengthen climate education through campaigns such as the Adolescents for Climate Action in Communities project, which included a study on the impact of climate change on more than 50 communities. Manuals for teachers and educators on climate action and environmental issues had been developed, and public advocacy campaigns for children and adolescents had been launched to improve water, sanitation and hygiene in schools and preschools.

16. Armenia was incorporating climate resilience and adaptation strategies into its national policy. All agricultural sector programmes were intended to ensure the efficient use of water and land resources, promote adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, and prevent damage from natural disasters. In 2023, the World Food Programme had conducted a comprehensive study and drawn up a report on the impact of climate change on livelihoods and food security throughout Armenia. By addressing the unique vulnerabilities faced by women and girls in the context of climate change, the Government was committed to ensuring that climate policies were inclusive and equitable.

17. The involvement of any person under 18 in any form of military activity involving the use of firearms was strictly prohibited by law. The Criminal Code of 2022 explicitly criminalized the conscription, recruitment or involvement of children under 18 in military service or active military operations. No training in the use of firearms and military combat was given in any educational institutions in Armenia, and all school activities were safe and free from exposure to armed conflict or military violence. Since the outbreak of war in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020, children had continuously felt the effects of military violence. The armed attacks by Azerbaijan against the territorial integrity of Armenia had disrupted everyday life in the border communities, and the displacement of people had severely undermined the security of the civilian population and the right of children to receive education in a safe and secure environment. Approximately 25,000 children in those regions had missed out on an education as schools had closed.

18. Education programmes on civil defence, disaster preparedness and personal safety provided young people with valuable knowledge and skills, empowered them to protect themselves and others, and enhanced their ability to respond effectively in times of crisis. All educational and training activities adhered to the highest standards of safety, respected human rights and complied with international law. Armenia had endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups, and the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers. However, the country was not a party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as the precarious security situation in the region made unilateral disarmament difficult and called for a flexible defence strategy. Azerbaijan had widely used cluster munitions to attack civilians in residential areas of Nagorno-Karabakh, as had been confirmed by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch reports. Given the absence of a comprehensive, binding and enforceable arms control framework, Armenia must maintain its defence capabilities to protect its sovereignty and people.

19. As part of the National Strategy on Human Rights Protection for the period 2023–2025 and the corresponding action plan, the draft law on national minorities would be amended to align it with international best practice and standards. The revised bill would be brought before the National Assembly for adoption in the second half of 2024. In 2023, the bill had been submitted to the Council of Europe for expert review and, in the following year, it had been presented to the European Commission for Democracy through Law and the Directorate General of Democracy for an opinion. In July 2024, the Ministry of Justice and the National Assembly had jointly organized expert discussions on the bill, and recommendations had been made based on those discussions.

20. **A representative of Armenia** said that everyone, including children, had the right to freely participate in and organize peaceful assemblies, pursuant to the Constitution and other laws. If minors were present at a place of assembly, the police were forbidden by law from using firearms or other special means of crowd control, unless the minors committed armed assault. Internal investigative and disciplinary mechanisms were in place to determine the circumstances of any unlawful use of firearms and prosecute offending officers. The police

were required to give several warnings before using any special means of crowd control, in order to allow minors time to withdraw. Police officers received training in the psychology of juvenile offenders, communication techniques, juvenile administrative responsibility, techniques for interviewing juveniles, the constitutional right to freedom of assembly, children's rights, police ethics, the use of force, the use of special means of crowd control and firearms, and, of course, constitutional guarantees of child rights protection.

21. The relevant police units periodically held meetings with pupils, teachers and parents to raise awareness of the harm caused by drug and alcohol use. Since 2022, the Ministry of Health had taken a series of measures to promote a healthy lifestyle, in the form of press conferences, reports, booklets, videos and interviews with Ministry specialists. All materials were available on the Ministry's website and social network pages.

22. The police were responsible for reuniting child beggars and vagrants with their families. Sports and other activities were organized for those children as part of an action plan to prevent begging. In 2023, only four child beggars had been identified by the police. Vagrancy and begging were regarded as a social issue, not an administrative offence, and the Government had developed and approved a procedure for handling begging and the connected problems of gambling, alcohol and drugs.

23. To protect the best interests of the child, it was forbidden to keep a minor brought to a police station for longer than stipulated by the Code of Administrative Offences. Under the Code, the police were forbidden from questioning and publishing or disseminating any information given by a child under 14 in the absence of a parent or legal representative. The police recorded the details of minors or of adults whose behaviour had a negative impact on minors, and the records were held for a period of one year, subject to extensions of six months if the behaviour continued. At the community level, psychologists, teachers or persons with similar qualifications were appointed to work with the police and visit the minor's place of residence once a month. More frequent visits could be carried out if required.

24. **A representative of Armenia** said that a whistle-blowing platform was available to enable citizens, including minors, to report crimes such as corruption. Criminal proceedings could be instituted based on reports submitted through the platform. More than 300 people had been trained in connection with the launch of the platform. Children could also express concerns through hotlines operated by the Human Rights Defender and local government websites. In the first half of 2024, the Human Rights Defender had received over 600 written and verbal complaints concerning child rights violations and had followed up on the complaints in an appropriate manner.

25. Minors were not detained for first-time or non-serious offences. Only one minor was currently being held at the penal establishment for women and juveniles. An extensive renovation project was under way at the prison to bring it into line with international standards. Incarcerated women and minors would soon be able to participate in sporting and educational activities and reintegration programmes.

26. The "Safe Corners" constituted barnahus facilities. They had fully equipped rooms where children could be interviewed and questioned without going to court. There were plans to expand the "Safe Corner" programme throughout the country, to ensure that no child victim of sexual exploitation, abuse or other crimes would have to attend court. The Ministry of Justice was working in collaboration with UNICEF to provide ongoing training in the juvenile justice system to judges, investigators and probation officers. Regarding the protection of children's personal data, a guideline had been issued and awareness-raising campaigns had been carried out, including an event organized by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports in all schools on data protection on the Internet.

27. **A representative of Armenia** said that, under a forthcoming law, the Government would establish social assistance programmes and services to address or mitigate the consequences of difficult life situations that required urgent responses. To that end, the roles, rights and responsibilities of social workers had been defined; a professional code of ethics had been revised; and a mandatory certification process had been introduced, which all social workers would have to complete by 2029. Monitoring of round-the-clock care institutions, to ensure that care was provided in accordance with minimum standards and that the rights of children receiving care were respected, would be carried out by NGOs as part of a new

public observer group, which would be set up once the law had been adopted. The composition, scope of powers and term of membership of the group would be determined by a decree of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

28. **Mr. Van Keirsbilck** (Country Task Force) said that several of the questions he had raised at the previous meeting (CRC/C/SR.2832) had gone unanswered, including whether children's rights would be included in a future referendum on the Constitution; what role children were playing in ongoing peace talks, what was being done to ensure accountability in cases of police violence against children; and what obstacles were preventing Armenia from becoming a party to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention).

29. He wished to know what arrangements were in place to support children involved in prostitution; whether a social approach was taken to assist children involved in begging in the streets, rather than punishing them; and what specific mechanisms were available to enable children to report incidents of violence against them. It would be helpful to have more information with regard to the assessment of the best interests of the child, in particular for children aged 14 and above.

30. **Ms. Zara** (Country Task Force) said that she wished to know what measures were being taken to monitor and formally evaluate sex education in the State party, and whether the Government intended to adopt a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents, with an emphasis on preventing early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. She would appreciate a response to a question she had previously raised on whether disaggregated data were available concerning the types of risks faced by children in disaster situations.

31. **Mr. Jaffé** (Country Task Force) said that he wished to know whether the State party might consider incorporating a child rights-based approach into its nationally determined contributions and public policies on climate change, taking into account the Committee's general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change. The Committee had received information indicating that, notwithstanding the signature by Armenia of the Safe Schools Declaration, schools in border areas were reportedly used by the military. He would welcome clarification on that point. He would like the delegation to comment on reports of violence against children, including allegations of torture, in police custody.

32. **Mr. Gudbrandsson** said that he wondered whether the testimony of child victims taken in "Safe Corner" or barnahus facilities could later be used in court proceedings, in order to prevent further trauma and revictimization of the child. He would like to know where medical evaluations of child victims of sexual abuse were carried out, and whether the trauma-focused therapy and other support that those children needed were provided in the "Safe Corners" or in the community.

33. **Ms. Aho** said that she wished to know what action the State party was taking to identify and mitigate the dangers posed by ageing school infrastructure: some schools reportedly were in an insalubrious condition, lacked basic amenities or were at risk of collapse. She wondered what measures were being taken to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and what was the status of implementation of a national strategic plan on combating tuberculosis, including the resources allocated and the impact on the prevalence rate of the disease.

*The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at 11.55 a.m.*

34. **A representative of Armenia** said that efforts to ensure the meaningful participation of children in decision-making on issues that affected them included a student parliament, which raised children's issues in the National Assembly; the Student Council, a steering committee that met with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports twice a year and provided feedback on relevant proposed legislation; and student councils that were present in all schools. In recognition of the need to further increase youth participation, the Government had set a target of establishing 25 State-funded youth centres by 2026, where young people would be empowered with the knowledge and skills to become agents of

change in their communities and regions, thereby contributing to the development and transformation of the country.

35. Significant progress had been made on gender mainstreaming in education. New education criteria, which covered eight core competencies, had been introduced and all textbooks and educational materials were being reviewed, including to eliminate gender-role stereotypes. Subjects such as home economics for girls and woodworking for boys had been replaced by a technology lesson for all children, irrespective of gender. Increasing numbers of girls were taking technology-related subjects in higher education.

36. The new education criteria included teaching on ecology and the environment in various subjects, including geography and biology. Many teachers had received training on climate-related subjects, with the support of development partners such as UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In 2024, almost a quarter of projects implemented by schools had been on environmental issues. Through a UNICEF project entitled “Adolescents for Climate Action in Their Communities”, for example, teachers and students had learned about climate issues and carried out activities in their communities. Human rights issues had also been mainstreamed in all school subjects and teacher training. The promotion of children’s participation in culture had likewise been incorporated. As the theme of the school year 2024/25 was cultural education, students would be encouraged to visit cultural institutions, such as museums and theatres.

37. The National Institute of Education had been replaced with an educational centre for innovation and development. It fulfilled the same role as the former Institute, in that it reviewed and developed educational materials and supported teacher retraining; however, unlike previously, teaching retraining programmes were no longer offered by the State but rather selected through competitive tendering processes, which supported the strengthening of civil society. Teachers were able to choose which competence they wished to develop and their preferred course provider. In addition, the Government was taking steps to make the teaching profession more attractive. For example, a voluntary certification initiative had been launched, through which teachers could increase – and, in some cases, even double – their basic wage. Teachers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects received additional benefits, as did teachers working in remote communities.

38. Between 2020 and 2022, school enrolment rates had increased in primary and lower secondary education. A decrease in enrolment at the upper secondary level was explained by the fact that many students opted for technical and vocational education and training instead. There were admittedly some gaps in the registration system; some students were in secondary education abroad but were shown as being out of education in the Armenian system. In accordance with a 2021 decree outlining the procedure for identifying children who had dropped out of school, the State registry was checked twice a year and social workers and, in some cases, police officers would visit the home to find out why the child was not in school. The same procedure was followed when a child was absent from school for more than a week. That approach was particularly useful for maintaining contact with national minorities, such as Yazidis, among whom early marriage might occur and have an impact on school enrolment.

39. The Government’s target of achieving 85 per cent preschool enrolment among children aged 3 to 5 years by 2026 was ambitious but achievable. Between 2019 and 2023, the enrolment rate had increased by some 10 percentage points, to 71 per cent. In the light of the school infrastructure projects that were under way, including the building, renovation or repair of 300 schools and 500 kindergartens by 2026, the Government was confident that the target could be met. In 2024 alone, 28 newly built schools had been opened and a further 17 would be completed by the end of the year. Between 2021 and 2024, almost 145 preschool institutions and kindergartens had been built or renovated. In monetary terms, investment in the school infrastructure had risen from just under 1 billion Armenian drams in 2018 to 13 billion Armenian drams in 2023. It was hoped that, by 2030, the school infrastructure, including schools that were currently in a poor state, would be vastly improved.

40. **A representative of Armenia**, providing an overview of the prenatal care, screening and monitoring available to expectant mothers, including those with at-risk pregnancies, said that the neonatal and infant mortality rates had decreased in recent years, as had the number

of stillbirths. Standards to improve the quality of medical care for newborns had been introduced and all necessary medicines for their care were provided. Special attention was paid to the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding; all maternity hospitals were required to have breastfeeding consultants. Parenteral nutrition was provided for low-weight newborns. The Ministry of Health monitored the implementation of a law promoting breastfeeding and regulating the circulation, sale and marketing of baby food. In 2024, all tertiary-level maternity hospitals had been inspected; any health worker found to have broken the law faced penalties. An initiative on nutrition in preschool education was being devised.

41. Progress was being made with regard to the phased introduction of a comprehensive health insurance. The basic and minimum service packages and lists of health screening examinations had been developed, as had details of the structure of the insurance fund and the budget for the provision of medical services, instruments and other services. The insurance would be rolled out across the health system; discussions were under way between the Government and the World Bank on a financing instrument to support that endeavour.

42. In 2019, the Government had joined the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative and carried out a national study, according to which some 27 per cent of schoolchildren were overweight and around 13 per cent were obese. The Government had launched a programme of measures, in 2021, to promote healthy lifestyles and nutrition. Every year, the Ministry conducted outreach campaigns to raise public awareness of the benefits of healthy lifestyles, a healthy diet and physical activity, and the risks of tobacco use and alcohol consumption. A programme on child nutrition, growth and development was being implemented in various regions of Armenia, and the health of internally displaced children was being monitored.

43. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the war in Nagorno-Karabakh had posed serious challenges to the Armenian health-care system. The blockade imposed on Nagorno-Karabakh had affected the provision of critical supplies and caused an influx of refugees and internally displaced persons, many of whom needed medical assistance. A number of children under 15 had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the period 2020–2023. The Ministry had introduced measures to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, organized relevant training for medical professionals, and reviewed and updated related legislation.

44. **A representative of Armenia** said that, following the introduction in 2021 of two major laws – one on the rights of persons with disabilities, the other on the functional assessment of persons with disabilities – and the amendment of hundreds of by-laws, the new disability assessment system had become fully operational at the start of 2024. On the basis of the outcome of a disability assessment, the adult or child concerned would receive a personalized rehabilitation plan. Care and rehabilitation services and psychosocial support for children were provided in day-care centres, some of which offered round-the-clock care. Personal assistants could be provided for persons with disabilities, including adolescents with disabilities, who were aged 15 and over and were in education or employment. Family members could become personal assistants, with the relevant training.

45. The Programme for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the period 2023–2027 was a comprehensive programme that contained various priorities, including on preventing discrimination and ensuring high-quality inclusive education for children with disabilities. An assessment was being made of the additional costs associated with living with a disability, taking into account needs at different stages of life; a case study of almost 10,000 children with disabilities had already been completed. The resulting data would contribute to efforts to differentiate services and to define allowances and measures to facilitate independent living. A budget of around 2 million Armenian drams had been earmarked for the provision of assistive technologies, to be distributed in the form of vouchers.

46. Steps were being taken to achieve deinstitutionalization and tackle stigma and discrimination. NGOs were among those involved in a mass awareness-raising campaign to combat stigma and discrimination against children with disabilities. Work was in progress to establish an independent life centre in Armavir. The centre would serve as a pilot project and would provide specific services for children and adults. For example, vocational training



would be offered to ensure that adolescents with disabilities had the skills needed to enter the labour market and live independently.

47. Efforts were being made to promote social integration and give priority to the family-based care of children, including children with disabilities, with some services delegated to relevant NGOs. Family reunification was encouraged, and a case management system had been set up to provide guidance and support to families, as needed. In one recent case, a 16-year-old boy with mental disabilities had been able to be reunited with his family after 10 years in an orphanage.

48. The content of a UNICEF white paper on the development of foster care in the Europe and Central Asia Region was being taken into consideration. The number of children in foster care had almost doubled, and action was being taken to ensure that such children received adequate assistance, taking into account the child's age and stage of life. Financial support to foster carers needed to be diversified, in order to consider not only the care component but also practical issues, such as the need for home adaptations for children with disabilities.

49. A case concerning alleged illegal adoptions was currently being heard by the courts. Amendments were being made to the adoption system, as part of wider reform of the Family Code, based on the recommendations made by a working group that had been set up for that purpose. The amendments included provisions on intercountry adoptions and the definition of the responsibilities of a monitoring body.

50. Measures had been taken to ensure that all children, including those under 10, had the right to be heard. Children's testimony could be recorded and used in procedures that affected them, such as in adoption processes or court proceedings. Lastly, existing programmes to combat poverty were being expanded to include additional measures for children in extreme poverty. For example, families living in poor conditions would be provided with assistance to renovate or repair their homes, and children would receive school supplies.

51. **A representative of Armenia** said that, as the country continued to make progress on its climate action commitments, the upcoming reporting cycle on the nationally determined contributions of Armenia might provide the Government with an opportunity to consider incorporating children's rights into its climate strategies, as appropriate.

52. It would be appreciated if the Committee could transmit the credible evidence it had received on the military usage of schools so that appropriate action could be taken, in accordance with the Government's commitment to safeguarding the well-being of schoolchildren and ensuring that schools remained safe spaces.

53. **Ms. Al Barwani** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that she wished to thank the delegation for a constructive dialogue. She hoped that the Committee's questions, comments and forthcoming concluding observations would help the State party in its continued efforts to provide a better environment for the children of Armenia.

54. **A representative of Armenia** said that the dialogue with the Committee had served to show that significant progress had been made in several aspects of children's rights, in areas including education, health, deinstitutionalization and the prevention of violence; however, disparities still existed, often exacerbated by socioeconomic factors, systemic inequalities and the impact of recent events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the refugee influx. The Government was determined to foster child-friendly environments, in which children could not only have their voices heard but also participate actively in matters that affected them. Child-sensitive budgeting remained a priority. The implementation of various measures, including the Complex Programme for the Protection of the Rights of the Child, would contribute to achievement of the various Sustainable Development Goals related to children's rights and well-being.

55. **The Chair** said that the Committee valued the delegation's efforts to provide responses to the many questions posed. She would encourage the delegation to submit any additional information for the Committee's consideration within 48 hours.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*