



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

E/C.12/2007/SR.45
28 April 2008

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Thirty-ninth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 45th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 14 November 2007, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. TEXIER

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GE.07-45520 (EXT)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS:

- (a) REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLES 16 AND 17 OF THE COVENANT (agenda item 6) (continued)

Second and third periodic reports of Paraguay (continued) (E/C.12/PRY/3; E/C.12/PRY/Q/3 and Add.1; HRI/CORE/1/Add.24)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Paraguay resumed their places at the Committee table.

Articles 1 to 5 of the Covenant (continued)

2. Mr. GAUTO VIELMAN (Paraguay) said that, like in most countries of Latin America, colonization in Paraguay had concentrated lands in the hands of a small number of owners. For some time, Paraguay had been working to address the problem of land tenure, as evidenced by the establishment in 1963 of the Rural Welfare Institute. Act No. 2419 of 2004, which had set up the National Institute of Rural and Land Development, aimed to put into place a model based on recognition of private property and the redistribution of land through the imposition of a tax to discourage the creation of large properties and to promote the rationalization of soil utilization. The Institute had made every effort to ensure a more rational distribution of land. With the help of a fiscal reform, the State had raised more budgetary resources and had purchased land for redistribution to dispossessed persons. It had redistributed more than 44,000 hectares in 2000, more than 34,000 in 2002, nearly 24,000 in 2004, more than 36,000 in 2005 and nearly 55,000 in 2006.

3. With regard to the rational utilization of water, Paraguay had recently introduced an act on the use of water resources in order to regulate the sustainable management of all water resources and territories in which they had their source or through which they passed. It had also elaborated a project for the sustainable protection of groundwater and the rational sharing of water resources by the member countries of Mercosur. To that end, it had concluded an agreement with Argentina and Brazil on the Guaraní aquifer system, one of the largest reservoirs of freshwater in the world.

4. Mr. ARCE (Paraguay) said that the web site of the Office of the Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo) contained information which might be useful for the Committee. In 2002, the Office had received complaints relating to civil rights, social rights (right to work, right to access to public services and right to health), economic rights (right to own private property), a number of specific rights (rights of the consumer, rights of children and adolescents etc.) and cultural rights (right to education). In 2004, nearly 1,200 complaints had been lodged with the Office of the Ombudsman, of which 402 had resulted in prosecution. In 2005, the Office had received some 3,200 complaints, including nearly 1,800 emanating from the interior of the country. It had also dealt ex officio with nearly 200 cases. The Ombudsman had not yet received any complaint of discrimination at the workplace for reasons of gender, but it had received complaints concerning mechanisms for the selection of candidates for posts filled by competitive examination, and it had itself lodged a complaint on that subject.

5. Following concerns expressed about gender equality, the universities had conducted a study in 2007 on first-year students which had revealed that women accounted for 45.5 per cent of students of law, 73 per cent of students of the notary profession, nearly 51 per cent of students in medicine and 70 per cent of students in physical therapy. That clearly demonstrated that women had wide access to higher education.

6. The forced eviction by the police of landless peasants from lands occupied by them was motivated by a need to enforce the law. Although those occupations were often of a social nature, there had also been cases in which lands, notably forestland, had been occupied and exploited by persons working for foreign companies. When an eviction order was issued, it was carried out by the police, but there had been only one or two such cases in recent years.

7. Mr. ACOSTA (Paraguay) said that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) had grown steadily since 2003, and Paraguay enjoyed sustained annual growth of five per cent. Per capita GDP had risen from 915 dollars in 2002 to 1,500 dollars in 2006. Exports had grown by nearly 13 per cent in 2006 compared to 2005 and had doubled between 2002 and 2006. The country's net international reserves had attained the record level of 20 per cent of GDP. The increase in fiscal revenue had made it possible to begin to respond to the social needs of the population and to make investments in infrastructure. In 2006, tax receipts had financed 80 per cent of current expenditure. The external debt had been reduced to 2.6 billion dollars, making Paraguay one of the least indebted countries in the region. The Government's medium-term objectives were to maintain the growth rate between four and six per cent, reduce the rate of inflation, consolidate public sector debt at less than 30 per cent of GDP and continue with its poverty eradication programmes. The Government also intended to broaden the coverage of transfer programmes based on specific conditions, which in 2006 had assisted more than 80,000 families living in extreme poverty. Social expenditure had increased substantially: whereas in 2003, it had amounted to 36 per cent of the budget of the central administration, the draft budget which had just been submitted to Parliament would increase the share to 50 per cent.

8. Mr. TIRADO MEJIA would like to have specific figures on the problem of land tenure and agrarian reform. In its concluding observations to Paraguay's initial report (E/C.12/1/Add.1), the Committee had noted with concern the slow pace at which the land reform provided for under the Constitution was proceeding. At the centre of the country's problems was the unequal distribution of lands, and above all the large number of landless peasants. If Paraguay considered that the increase in property taxes was a way of addressing the problem, which he doubted, it would be useful for the delegation to provide exact figures. In particular, the Committee would need to know how many peasants had benefited from the lands purchased and redistributed by the State.

9. Mr. SAID asked whether a fund had been set up for persons who became property owners under the agrarian reform in order to help them farm their lands. He would also like to know whether the deforestation trend had been reversed and whether the damage caused had been repaired.

Articles 6 to 9 of the Covenant

10. Mr. RZEPLINSKI said that, according to the 2005 and 2006 reports of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the act on the right to organize, although very positive, did

not permit trade union officials to defend their freedom of action. Private employers disregarded the act entirely, and industrial relations tribunals were very slow, and thus extremely long periods elapsed before a ruling was made. Pursuant to the bill recently submitted to Parliament, it took at least 50 persons to create a new trade union, which was a very large number in view of European norms, especially when the members of the new trade union wanted to remain independent of existing federations or confederations. Employers were also in a position of force, because they could raise an objection to the registration of a trade union and thus delay its recognition. More information on the question would be welcome.

11. As the delegation had acknowledged that many children, including some under 12 years of age, were employed as domestic workers in middle-class families, particularly in cities, he asked about the relevant policy of the ministry responsible for the protection of the rights of the child. Given that there was a very ambitious plan to ensure the right to education for all children but apparently no policy to eradicate child labour, the Committee would like to have detailed information on specific Government decisions and rulings of lower courts relating to the protection of working children, especially in connection with sexual harassment.

12. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), one child in six did not have a legal existence because the birth had not been registered at a bureau of vital statistics. He reminded the State party of its responsibility for ensuring that all children were so registered so that they could assert their rights under the Covenant.

13. Mr. MARTYNOV, recalling that in its previous concluding observations, the Committee had expressed concern that half of all workers did not earn the minimum wage, noted that 40 per cent were still in that category, although major progress had thus been made, for which the State party should be commended. He asked the delegation to indicate whether the Government had a specific plan to improve the implementation of the minimum wage and what measures were envisaged to do so. He also noted that although there was no minimum wage in the public sector, salaries there were more or less linked to the minimum wage in the private sector; in practice, however, it seemed that the salary of more than half of all civil servants was less than the minimum wage in the private sector. He wondered whether the Government planned to introduce a minimum wage in the public sector (which would be a way of protecting the rights of civil servants), and if so, what measures were envisaged to ensure implementation.

14. Mr. RZEPLINSKI said that, according to the statistics of the Paraguay Foundation for Sustainable Development, in 2006 80 per cent of workers had been employed in the informal sector and had not had any social protection. He asked the delegation to indicate whether the Government planned to address the situation and what measures, if any, had been taken to do so.

15. Ms. WILSON, noting that in paragraph 182 of the report under consideration, the State party recognized the existence of de facto discrimination against indigenous persons, would like to know what measures the Government had taken or planned to take to eliminate it.

16. Ms. BONOAN-DANDAN, pointing out that the impact of rural-urban migration on employment was probably considerable, asked what the Government's policy was to ensure the right to work of those concerned. She wondered what particular problems were encountered on the labour market by persons under 30 years of age, who accounted for 64 per cent of the population, what the policy was in the area and whether unemployment and underemployment

rates were known. She also enquired what the average income was of farmers and whether it was sufficient to ensure a decent living for their families and, more generally, what the State party's strategic vision was with regard to employment problems. Lastly, she would like to know whether the basic pension of employees provided them with an adequate standard of living and whether the State party planned to increase pension benefits to encourage persons working in the informal sector to join the formal sector.

17. Ms. BARAHONA RIERA said it was regrettable that there was no legislation to protect domestic workers, who were often heads of families and were thus forced to accept conditions imposed on them, namely a salary 40 per cent lower than the minimum wage. She asked whether the State party planned to address the problem and to take affirmative action measures to guarantee equal pay for men and women in practice. She would also like to know whether complaints had been lodged for sexual harassment at the workplace and in particular whether domestic workers had made accusations of that nature. Lastly, she enquired whether the State party intended to introduce an employment policy to curb the large-scale emigration of women farmers and nurses to Europe.

18. Ms. RUIZ DIAZ DE ESPINOLA (Paraguay) said that Paraguay had introduced a National Policy on Childhood and Adolescence (POLNA) and a plan to eradicate child labour and supervise adolescent labour. In general, children worked as peddlers in the streets of Asunción and other cities or as domestic workers. The Abrazo programme, established to provide comprehensive social protection to children at risk, was currently assisting 1,340 children. Its objective was to ensure that such children were registered at the bureau of vital statistics and had access to education, health care and adequate food. The persons responsible for the programme worked upstream with mothers, who received benefits so that their children were not forced to leave the family and go to work.

19. Children employed in households usually worked in urban middle-class families, who gave them board and lodging and paid their school fees. Sometimes they were victims of sexual harassment or were deprived of their right to education and eventually ran away and were in danger of ending up on the street or becoming addicted to drugs. The Secretariat for Childhood and Adolescence, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Global Infancia, attempted to protect them and to defend their rights, notably within the framework of the National Programme of Comprehensive Care for Disabled Children and Adolescents. The objective of all stakeholders was to combat child labour and sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes, in cooperation with other MERCOSUR countries.

20. Article 76 of the Constitution had made primary school education free and compulsory. To broaden access to education, the Government had focused on the most vulnerable population groups in rural areas, making sure that textbooks were distributed and that parents were involved in the life of the school.

21. In order to guarantee that all children enjoyed the right to an identity, had a sense of belonging to a family and could acquire Paraguayan citizenship, civil registry offices had been established which issued parents identity papers for the child free of charge when the child was registered. Together with measures taken by the State to combat corruption and eliminate administrative obstacles to the registration of births, awareness campaigns had been conducted to encourage parents to declare their child, the ultimate objective being to have all children

registered before their first birthday. Good results had already been achieved in a number of departments.

22. Mr. ARCE (Paraguay) said that the modalities for the registration of births had changed, and it was now sufficient to go to a civil registry office with two witnesses for the birth certificate to be validated. Moreover, as part of a programme jointly conducted by the Organization of American States (OAS) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), a computerized civil registry office scrutinized the whole country, even the most remote areas, including the region bordering Brazil, to make sure that children were registered. The programme had been a success, 30,000 children having been registered in the first six months of 2007. In the past, persons working for civil registry offices had not been remunerated; their status had been reviewed, and they would now be receiving a salary.

23. Landowners must pay a tax equal to one per cent of the (non-market) fiscal value of their lands. Seventy per cent of the tax went to the municipality, 15 per cent to the department and the remaining 15 per cent to a common fund for the poorest villages. The tax rate was two per cent for farms with more than 50,000 hectares in the eastern region and more than 60,000 hectares in other regions, and it increased progressively as a function of the size of the property.

24. There were no restrictions in Paraguay on the right to organize, and no complaint had been lodged for discrimination for reasons of membership in a trade union. However, in businesses of 30 persons, 20 were required to form a trade union, a figure which rose to 300 in industry.

25. The labour contracts of domestic workers were quite special, because the person concerned lived throughout the week in the family, which gave her board and lodging and paid her school fees. Those payments in kind must be deducted from her salary, which thus could not be compared with other salaries or with the minimum wage. On the other hand, employers who did not pay social security contributions for their domestic workers or did not pay them a salary (minus in-kind benefits) that was equivalent to the minimum wage were liable to prosecution. However, labour inspectors were few in number, and they usually did not intervene unless there had been a complaint.

26. To address informal labour, the national service to promote employment held occupational training courses, from which 180,000 persons had already benefited. Heads of enterprises paid a contribution for occupational training so that the workforce was trained in areas in which jobs were available, the goal being to curb migrations. In 2008, the Paraguayan Industrial Union planned to train 3,000 technicians nationwide.

27. It was estimated that 80,000 persons had emigrated to Europe. Spain having established a quota for Latin America to attract qualified personnel, those professionals had left their jobs and their country in search of a higher standard of living. With regard to internal migration, it was estimated that 5.2 per cent of the population had gone from one urban area to another, 2.7 per cent from urban to rural areas, 2.3 per cent from rural to urban areas and 2.8 per cent from one rural area to another; 31 per cent of persons who moved to another part of the country did so for reasons of employment and 57 per cent in order to obtain training.

28. Mr. TABOADA (Paraguay), referring to salary disparities between men and women, said that article 89 of the Constitution provided for equality of rights and obligations for all workers,

and article 28 of the Labour Code specified that any reference to a worker or employer automatically included women. In practice, however, women only earned 73.1 per cent as much as men, although those disparities were less pronounced in the civil service and were negligible at the highest administrative posts. A standing tripartite commission for equal opportunity at work, instituted by a decree of 1998 and responsible for analysing ways of achieving such equality, was composed of representatives of the State, workers and employers. In 2006, ILO Convention No. 156 had been ratified, and an information and public awareness campaign had been conducted to make the contents of the Covenant known. In the same year, 12,371 property deeds had been issued to female heads of families. The State party had also introduced a procedure to facilitate the lodging of complaints for discrimination or wage inequality and had put into place an information and awareness programme for the public at large and for a number of specific sectors.

29. Mr. ACOSTA (Paraguay) said that there was no wage discrimination between the public and private sectors but that for budgetary reasons, until 2005 many civil servants had earned a salary that was less than the minimum wage. As from 2006, the Government had raised salaries in the civil service in proportion to the gap between the salary earned and the minimum wage. Some salaries were still less than the minimum wage in order to avoid the five per cent value added tax (VAT). That would no longer be the case as of 2008, because all salaries of civil servants and contractual State employees would be raised to at least the minimum wage. In the past two years, disparities between salaries in the private and public sectors had declined considerably, and the minimum wage had been raised to US\$ 230.

30. Pensions depended on the size and duration of contributions. If all criteria were met, the pension paid was equal to 95 per cent of the salary of the last two years. The social security scheme was made up of various elements, including the private sector scheme (whose guardian body was the Institute of Social Welfare and in which the wage-earner paid 9.5 per cent and the employer 16 per cent), which was governed by special legislation. The scheme, which concerned the entire formal sector, would probably be extended to the informal sector – the independently employed – who, in exchange for a minimal contribution (about US\$ 30 per month), would be eligible for health care and medicines upon retirement. It was also planned that the public sector would join the scheme. There were pension funds (89 in all, covering about 70 per cent of the population) for the central administration, the banking sector, the national power company and municipal employees. Contributions took the form of mandatory deductions, but workers who had not contributed could join the pension fund of the Institute of Social Welfare. Social assistance for persons in need was provided by the Ministry of Public Health, which had local offices and hospitals throughout the country, made free care available to the entire population and conducted vaccination campaigns.

31. Ms. RUIZ DIAZ DE ESPINOLA (Paraguay) said that the State party was returning lands to indigenous populations living in rural areas. Through the intermediary of the Paraguayan Institute of Indigenous People, those populations were provided with training to help them find work under the most equitable conditions possible. The objective of the measures was to enable indigenous populations to ensure their food security at all times and to earn the income to which they were entitled.

32. Mr. GAUTO VIELMAN (Paraguay) said that 2,120 families had benefited from the land reform in 2004, and 3,850 property deeds had been issued in the same year, which, given a

population of six million inhabitants, illustrated the State party's commitment to an equitable distribution of land.

33. Mr. SADI asked whether Paraguay planned to make domestic labour by children illegal: in the light of ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182, there was every reason to do so. He also asked whether the State party could cite statistics or highly publicized cases involving persons prosecuted for violating the rights of street children or children employed as domestic workers, as well as their number, because prosecuting the perpetrators was the only way of heightening public awareness of the problem. He expected the State party to answer those questions in its next periodic report.

34. Mr. MARTYNOV asked whether there was a mandatory minimum wage for civil servants and public officials.

35. Mr. RZEPLINSKI would like to know how many labour inspectors were assigned to monitor the working conditions of children employed as domestic workers, how many proceedings had been instituted, in how many instances the employers of those children had been prosecuted, what the exact nature was of the labour inspectors' mandate and what specifically they were doing to improve the situation of those children.

36. Mr. ARCE (Paraguay) explained that under the civil service act, the Labour Code directly governed the equality of provisions and criteria applicable to civil servants. According to a report by the General Labour Directorate, the current minimum wage was set exclusively as a function of the provisions of the Labour Code. A commission composed of representatives of the central bank, the private sector and trade unions met to decide on a new minimum wage when variations in the consumer price index exceeded ten per cent. To set the minimum wage, the commission took into account the Labour Code, technical reports, the cost of living index, compounded inflation and the consumer price index.

37. He did not have exact data on the number of proceedings instituted for rape or sexual harassment of children employed as domestic workers, but he could think of several highly publicized cases which had led to indictments and convictions. The delegation could convey some statistics on the subject; its next periodic report would contain exact figures.

38. Ms. RUIZ DIAZ DE ESPINOLA (Paraguay) said that the problem of working children, including as domestic workers, was at the core of the national policy to protect and guarantee rights, which was carried out inter alia by the action of the Social Cabinet on behalf of groups or individuals who were exploited or at risk. The policy also aimed to do away with the employment of children in middle-class families, sometimes on the pretext of education. The State party, which was also duty-bound to combat the risks facing children who worked in their own family, in particular in rural areas, sought to eliminate child labour in general and thought that it would be able to put an end to the worst forms of child labour by 2009 and to all forms of the phenomenon by 2020.

39. Ms. BARAHONA RIERA sought clarification on the wage of domestic workers and noted that it was common in Latin America for board and lodging to be part of the salary, of which no more than 40 per cent remained. She supposed that there must be studies on ways of increasing

the minimum wage of those workers, who needed to be included in a social security scheme in both rural and urban areas.

Articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant

40. Ms. BARAHONA RIERA said that sanctions for domestic violence – simple fines – were very light. In her view, the article of the Penal Code on that subject should have a stricter definition of violence against women; criminal sanctions should be imposed for the offence. She also asked for facts and figures on maternal mortality and its causes, as well as on abortion and health care policies to discourage it, relevant legislation and urban-rural disparities.

41. She wondered whether there was any legislation on reproductive health and what prevention and protection measures had been taken in that regard. She would also like to learn more about the health care coverage of the rural and urban populations, whether indigenous women or women in rural areas received basic health care free of charge and whether there were special programmes for indigenous populations which respected their culture and traditions.

42. Mr. ATANGANA said that the Government had replied in great detail to question 18 of the list of issues and had referred to article 229 of the Penal Code and act 1600/00 of 2000, but he would like to know whether there were any statistics on the subject. He also asked whether the revision of the Penal Code referred to in paragraph 96 of the written replies concerned domestic violence and, if so, to what extent current sentences and repressive measures would be made more severe.

43. Mr. RIEDEL, commending the State party on its recent measures and projects in the area of mental health, would like to know whether there had been many hospitalizations in psychiatric institutions, whether there were any follow-up measures and what provisions were planned to improve the situation of mentally ill patients. It emerged from the Government's written reply to question 32 of the list of issues that 52 per cent of the population did not have health care coverage; that was a very low figure. He wondered how the Government planned to address the situation, given that such coverage, and in particular access to health care and basic medicines, was vital. He also enquired what specific actions and measures had been put into place by the Government to improve the situation of pregnant women and infants; the delegation should provide that information in its next periodic report at the latest.

44. Mr. PILLAY cited information provided by NGOs according to which there had been more than 350 cases of forced eviction between 1990 and 2004 and that the persons evicted, mainly small farmers, had not received any compensation or offer of resettlement. It had been reported that the policy of forced eviction was continuing at the same rate and that the public authorities had not reacted to it in any way. He asked the delegation to provide information on the matter, and he drew the attention of the State party to the Committee's General Comments 4 and 7 on the right to adequate housing. He would also like to know whether it was true that there was no housing policy in rural areas, and he asked for statistics on homeless persons in urban zones.

45. Noting that ten per cent of landowners owned more than 66 per cent of lands, he said that in his view, the impossibility for many Paraguayans to acquire land was a major factor in poverty. Given that poverty had been on the rise since 2000, he asked what measures had been taken to overcome the enormous disparities between rich and poor.

46. Mr. RZEPLINSKI enquired about the current situation in prisons and referred to information sources according to which the most vulnerable inmates were exploited by others operating in gangs or by prison guards. He would also like to obtain information on children enlisted in the army and on measures taken to protect minors against all the dangers associated with military activities.

47. Ms. WILSON expressed surprise that Paraguay had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict although it permitted the enlistment of minors in its armed forces. She would like to learn more about conditions for joining the army and asked what the minimum age was for enlistment.

48. Mr. ZHAN Daode asked why, as indicated in the report, some children did not receive medical assistance. He noted, in paragraph 220 of the report, that the minimum age for employment was set at 14 years, which Paraguay should raise so as to encourage young people to stay in school, because only with the best education would children be able to overcome poverty. He also gathered that there was no unemployment compensation in Paraguay, and he asked what the State was doing to help unemployed persons.

49. Mr. DASGUPTA, referring to the problem of child prostitution, which was said to be particularly widespread in Paraguay's border regions, asked whether the State party had implemented a more robust policy to crack down on prostitution or had adopted measures to combat corruption in the police, since the police were said to accept bribes to ignore the conditions of child prostitutes and to refrain from reporting procurers.

50. Ms. BONOAN-DANDAN said that, according to several NGOs, the agrarian reform had done little to address inequalities between large landowners and small farmers and that only a handful of persons had benefited from the redistribution of land. She would therefore like to know more about the beneficiaries of the agrarian reform and about the origin of the lands acquired by the State for redistribution. With regard to problems of malnutrition and undernourishment, the report had dealt only with the situation of children, although surely other vulnerable groups were affected as well. The delegation was urged to provide additional information in that regard. More generally, she enquired whether a law existed which made it possible to guarantee the right to food for everyone. She was also surprised at the lack of attention given to rural populations, although 47 per cent of the overall population lived in the countryside and agriculture was still a very important economic sector. Noting that the deterioration of the environment and the contamination of water had enormous consequences for rural communities, she asked what measures were envisaged to address the situation.

51. Mr. SADI said it was unfortunate that there was no national policy to promote food security and drew the State party's attention to the Committee's General Comment 12 on the right to adequate food. He also urged Paraguay to declare child labour illegal and to encourage families to send their children to school rather than to have them work once they reached 14 years of age.

52. Mr. TIRADO MEJIA asked whether national studies had been conducted on the use of fungicides, herbicides and insecticides by big farms and on the impact of such utilization on local communities. He also referred to information sources, including a report by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights drawing attention to alleged cases of abuse in

psychiatric institutions. He would like to know whether the State party had investigated those cases and whether measures had been taken to improve the situation.

Articles 13 to 15 of the Covenant

53. Mr. KERDOUN welcomed the educational reform instituted in 2004 and the adoption of the 2004-2008 national literacy plan and the national “Reawakening” programme to teach children over 15 years of age who had dropped out of school. What had been the results to date? He would also like to learn more about the many loans and subsidies which Paraguay had received from international bodies and donor countries with a view to combating illiteracy.

54. Mr. MARCHAN ROMERO wondered about the criteria used in the 2002 census to determine indigenous status: had those interviewed been asked whether or not they considered themselves to be indigenous persons? Assuming that Paraguayan legislation was in conformity with international norms on indigenous peoples, including ILO Convention No. 169, there seemed to be a real lack of political determination on the part of the public authorities to implement it. He asked the delegation to comment. He also noted that a number of NGOs had referred to extrajudicial executions of peasants who had been fighting for their rights, and he sought an explanation on the subject from the State party. Lastly, he would like to know why the peasant movement had triggered such a violent reaction on the part of the public authorities.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.
