



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Fifty-first session

Summary record of the 1031st meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 22 February 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Pimentel

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention *(continued)*

Combined third and fourth periodic reports of Algeria (CEDAW/C/DZA/3-4, CEDAW/C/DZA/Q/4 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Jazairi** (Algeria), introducing his country's combined third and fourth periodic reports, said that since its submission of its second periodic report in 2005, Algeria had made notable progress in promoting the advancement of women. The third and fourth reports had been prepared with input from an array of governmental and civil society bodies, including women's organizations.
3. His Government was aware that no sustainable development policy could succeed without full respect for women's human rights and without women's involvement in development and decision-making processes, and his Government was working to further those objectives.
4. The framework for women's rights in Algeria consisted of the Constitution and other laws and regulations, national development strategies, and regional and international instruments to which Algeria was party. The Constitution clearly enshrined the principle of equality among citizens, and prohibited discrimination on the basis of birth, race, gender, opinion or any other condition or personal circumstance. In the past decade, the Constitution, the Family Code and the Nationality Code had been amended to strengthen the protection of women's rights. International instruments ratified by his country had primacy over national legislation. The country's reservation to article 2 of the Convention ensured that its commitments under that article would not conflict with the Family Code, which was based on Islamic law. The reservation to article 15 of the Convention was no longer necessary. The reservation to article 16 of the Convention could be lifted following amendments to the Family Code.
5. The institutional framework for promoting policies for families and women included the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women, the National Council on the Family and Women, and the National Strategy for the Promotion and Integration of Women and the associated action plan for 2010–2014. The Government was working to improve women's participation in public life and the decision-making process. The Constitution guaranteed all citizens equal access to Government positions and employment within the framework of the law. Citing a number of examples of women's increased presence in political and public life, he said that in December 2011, parliament had adopted a law designed to expand women's representation in elected bodies.
6. His Government believed that education was the best way of promoting and protecting women's rights and therefore devoted a sizeable share of the State budget to it. The fact that basic education was now compulsory and free of charge had led to a substantial increase in girls' school enrolment rate. The National Literacy Strategy for 2007–2016 placed special emphasis on women and girls in rural areas and those aged from 15 to 49 years. The State provided poor schoolchildren with scholarships, school supplies, meals and transport. Female students now outnumbered their male counterparts at the secondary-school level and in higher education, which explained why the proportion of girls pursuing vocational education had decreased.
7. His country had made noteworthy progress towards providing equal access for all to health care. In recent years, awareness of the importance of reproductive health and

reproductive rights had gained ground, as had the provision of treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, infertility and genital cancer. Although Algeria had low rates of HIV/AIDS infection, 61 centres throughout the country provided free, anonymous screening. The maternal mortality rate had fallen by nearly two thirds between 1992 and 2010.

8. National labour legislation banned all forms of gender-based discrimination in employment in conformity with his country's international commitments. It also guaranteed to all the right to work and upheld the principle of equal pay for equal work. The social security scheme included specific protective measures for women with regard to maternity benefits and retirement conditions. Agricultural reform policies benefited rural women. Some 17 per cent of women were in the workforce.

9. A range of measures were in place to assist women with disabilities and migrant women and girls. National asylum legislation was being brought into line with international instruments such as the relevant International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

10. His Government was making every effort to combat violence, including domestic violence against women, within the framework of the National Strategy to Combat Violence against Women. The State proscribed all forms of physical and moral violence and all attacks on human dignity. In keeping with its commitment to the principle of the inviolability of the human being, Algeria had hosted two visits by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences in 2007 and 2010. The Special Rapporteur's recommendations had proven to be very useful in furthering efforts to combat violence against women. Although difficulties had been encountered in the interpretation and application of changes made in 2005 to the Family Code with regard to marriage, polygamy and divorce, the State's commitment to the reforms remained steadfast. Measures to support victims of violence included the establishment of a hotline and multidisciplinary centres providing psychological counselling, legal and social assistance and guidance.

11. His Government stood ready to work closely with the Committee to further the advancement of women. Algerian women would benefit from the broad reforms that were under way to strengthen democracy and boost economic growth.

Articles 1 to 6

12. **Ms. Ameline** said that the Committee was aware of the difficult circumstances faced by the State party in the recent past. She would welcome information on the State party's plans for continuing to eliminate provisions that discriminated against women from its legislation. While the State party had made an effort to ensure that the National Human Rights Commission was in line with the Paris Principles, it appeared that work remained to be done in that area. She wished to know whether women who had been victims of violence during the crisis had received adequate compensation. It was important to ensure that national reconciliation efforts did not undermine women's rights or the struggle against impunity. She asked whether the State party intended to consult women's civil society organizations as it proceeded to implement the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. Noting that the President of Algeria had initiated a dialogue concerning the idea of adapting Islamic law to contemporary society, she asked what the scope of that undertaking might be. The Committee would be very interested to see how an effective synthesis of customary or religious law and the provisions of the Convention might be created.

13. **Ms. Patten** said that she welcomed the State party's withdrawal of its reservation to article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention. In the light of the extensive reform of the Family

Code and the amendment of article 29 of the Constitution, which embodied the principle of equality, the reservation to article 2 appeared to no longer have any purpose. She asked whether a time frame had been established for its withdrawal. She would also like to know when the State party's reservation to article 15, paragraph 4, of the Convention, was likely to be withdrawn.

14. Article 29 of the Constitution prohibited discrimination on the ground of sex but did not contain a definition of discrimination against women that was in conformity with article 1 of the Convention. She asked whether the Government planned to include such a definition in its Constitution or other domestic laws.

15. There was little information in the State party's responses to the list of issues and questions on the possible ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention or of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, concerning the length of the Committee's sessions. Noting that ratification of the Optional Protocol was a strong signal of the commitment of States parties to women's human rights, she enquired whether there were any obstacles in that respect.

16. Pointing out that de jure and de facto access to adequate and effective judicial remedies were essential for advancing the rights of women, she asked whether Ordinance No. 71-57 on the assignment of counsel and legal aid in criminal matters, which dated back to 1971, was applicable to women victims of domestic and other forms of violence, as well as to women who were parties in divorce cases. What were the eligibility criteria for legal aid? Was such aid available to vulnerable women, such as those with disabilities?

17. **Ms. Gabr** said that she regretted that the delegation did not include a representative from the National Council on the Family and Women and representatives from a broader range of ministries. She would also have welcomed hearing from the focal point for women's issues. Failing that, she would appreciate a full account of the responsibilities of the focal point and her involvement in giving effect to the provisions of the Convention. It would be useful if a single governmental entity were to be entrusted with ensuring the implementation of the Convention, drawing up studies, drafting policies and white papers, and gathering statistics. Such a unit should cooperate with civil society organizations, whose efforts underpinned the success of any policy, especially in developing countries. She asked how civil society organizations that worked on women's issues received the support they needed. The involvement of stakeholders would help to consolidate the gains made by the Government.

18. Although women's role within the family was undoubtedly of central importance, women's role as independent individuals should also be recognized and addressed. Because of changing social mores in Algeria and the increasing number of single women and women who lived alone, the State party might wish to conduct an in-depth study of the status of Algerian women. Lastly, she would like to know who had the decision-making power to withdraw reservations to the Convention.

19. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao said that, in its concluding comments of 2005 (CEDAW/C/DZA/CC/2), the Committee had recommended that the State party should take concrete steps, including temporary special measures, to ensure that women enjoyed de facto equality with men in all sectors. Yet it was unclear whether any such measures had actually been taken in Algeria, as the information provided on page 34 of the periodic report dealt more with general social policies aimed at improving the situation of women than with specific examples. She would therefore invite the State party to review the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, which outlined the meaning and scope of such measures, in order to gain a better understanding of their purpose. She would like to know what the main obstacles were to the application of temporary special measures and within what time frame the Government intended to introduce them. The delegation's

comments would be appreciated on reports that political parties considered such positive action to be discriminatory. Was any training in respect of the Convention provided to members of political parties?

20. **Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria) said that the question of withdrawing certain reservations to the Convention had been discussed by the competent authorities, and an internal process existed for that purpose. The delegation had unanimously decided to make a recommendation for their withdrawal in its final report to the Government. The reservation to article 29 of the Convention, which related to the acceptance of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, was an issue that lay outside the sphere of responsibility of the delegation and reflected a general policy position on the part of the Government.

21. **Mr. Saadi** (Algeria) said that some of the reservations to the Convention had become obsolete and could easily be withdrawn. Authority to do so was in the hands of the executive branch and, more specifically, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice. Such decisions were formalized by means of presidential decrees.

22. **Ms. Hamrit** (Algeria) said that the Government compensated victims of terrorism pursuant to two presidential decrees that provided for the implementation of the Charter for Peace and National Reconciliation.

23. **Ms. Moussaoui** (Algeria) said that a nationwide network of specialists provided psychological and other forms of support to women victims of terrorism. The first support centre, which had been opened in 1998, had hosted a large number of women victims who had subsequently been rehabilitated and had returned to lead normal lives in society. She did not have precise data on the number of women who had been attended at those centres.

24. **Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria) said that difficulties surrounding efforts to modernize Islamic law sometimes lay not in the content of the law but rather in mistaken or narrow interpretations of it. Some people considered that, because Algeria was not in a position to withdraw some of its reservations, it condoned discrimination. Such conclusions overlooked the finer points of the law. For example, sharia rules concerning inheritance were often characterized as unfair to women. Yet the distribution of an estate under Islamic law, in some cases, afforded even more rights and a more substantial share to women than to the men concerned because men had financial responsibilities towards their unmarried sisters and widowed mothers that diminished their own share. The same situation prevailed in the case of a divorce. He would ensure that information on the relevant national studies was transmitted to the Committee in due course.

25. **Ms. Houacine** (Algeria) said that the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women was the focal point responsible for centralizing and coordinating action on women's issues. Given that women's issues intersected with many different areas of activity, all of the relevant sectors were invited to take part in the development of its programme of work and policies. The National Council on the Family and Women had been established in 2006 and included representatives from a broad spectrum of organizations, such as ministries and government agencies, NGOs, professional associations and research centres. The Council advised the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women.

26. **Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria) said that two ministries were responsible for women's issues: the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women, and the Ministry of National Solidarity, the Family and the Community Abroad. Moreover, special units responsible for the status of women had been set up within other ministries. The role of women was certainly not reduced to its expression within the family, but extended to every walk of life.

27. The Government had not yet decided whether to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention for reasons that he was not in a position to explain. However, he wished to

point out that Algeria had signed many other optional protocols to other human rights conventions, which entailed an enormous amount of work for the relevant institutions. His mission was often overwhelmed with letters and reminders that it had not replied to one or another inquiry or complaint under a particular optional protocol. At some stage, a review should be undertaken of the capacity of developing countries and their missions to follow up on the large number of requests that they received in connection with those protocols.

28. **Ms. Benmansour** (Algeria) said that the Government had adopted temporary special measures in the form of laws aimed at increasing women's participation in elected assemblies. Quotas constituted one such measure and would be maintained until parity had been reached.

29. Regarding women's right to access to justice, it should be noted that, under article 140 of the Constitution, justice was equal for all and accessible to all. Those principles were also embodied in the Code of Civil Procedure and the Code of Criminal Procedure. There were no laws preventing women from having recourse to the courts when they were victims of an offence. Legal aid was provided to all citizens, irrespective of their income, and was made available, in particular, to women in divorce cases, alimony suits and cases involving child custody or housing.

30. Judges and law officers received training on the principles of the Convention, and the Government had taken steps to ensure that women victims were informed about their rights and the remedies available to them. Article 132 of the Constitution expressly provided that treaties ratified by the President in accordance with the Constitution were superior to the law. As such, they could be invoked before any national court, regardless of whether or not they had been incorporated into domestic law.

31. **Ms. Houacine** (Algeria) said that gender quotas were in effect in local and provincial council elections. All the political parties had taken part in drafting a law for submission to the Cabinet and the parliament which would set quotas for female participation on electoral lists at between 25 and 50 per cent.

32. **Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria) said that the Charter on Peace and National Reconciliation did not afford impunity for criminal acts, and no amnesty had been granted to perpetrators of sexual violence committed during the crisis of the 1990s.

33. **Ms. Šimonović** said that she welcomed the fact that the Convention was directly applicable in the Algerian legal system, but asked how the Government could ensure that all its provisions were effectively enforced unless they were known to the judiciary and supported by additional laws on discrimination. She requested further information on training for the judiciary, the apparent lack of references to the Convention in the courts and the possibility of ratifying the Optional Protocol. She asked if the State party's reservation to article 2 implied that some elements of the article were applicable while others were not.

34. **Ms. Jahan** noted with pleasure that the withdrawal of the remaining reservations was being actively considered and said that she hoped that the delegation would convey the Committee's appeal to the Government to continue its efforts in that direction. Sharia law and women's rights were not mutually exclusive, as demonstrated by the varying ways in which sharia law was applied in different Muslim countries. Referring to the examples provided by the delegation in which women were at an advantage because men bore the brunt of, in particular, financial responsibilities, she asked whether men who did not fulfil such obligations could be brought to justice.

35. **Ms. Acar** asked if the delegation had also agreed to recommend the prompt withdrawal of the reservations to articles 2 and 16 to its Government. Although she was keenly aware of how delicate a task it was to harmonize Islamic law with international

norms on women's rights, it was the Committee's job to verify States parties' compliance with the Convention, and the only criterion that it could use in doing so was equality, both formal and substantive. Much of what passed for sharia law was actually simply a justification of patriarchal structures and stereotypical gender roles. Other Islamic countries had found ways to withdraw their reservations to, for example, article 16. She would suggest that the focus in combating discrimination against women should be shifted from conflicts with Islamic law to the question of what could be done in respect of patriarchal traditions.

36. **Ms. Schulz** said that she was concerned about reports from independent sources that foreign funding for NGOs would be prohibited. She asked for comment on that assertion and wondered whether the Government would make up for the resulting funding shortfall.

37. **Ms. Gabr** said that she took the considerable progress made at the executive and legislative levels in harmonizing domestic law with international women's rights commitments as proof that balance could be achieved between international commitments and social values. The National Centre for Studies, Information and Documentation on the Family, Women and Children should conduct research and work with other Islamic countries in order to compile information on best practices in promoting women's rights.

38. **Ms. Rasekh** asked if there was a single agency that was responsible for all matters relating to the implementation of the Convention and if temporary special measures were being taken in areas other than the participation of women in politics. Did the gender quotas apply only to electoral lists or were they equally valid for the composition of elected bodies?

39. **Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria) said that the delegation did not have the authority to speak to the potential withdrawal of the State party's now obsolete reservation to article 15 and that the reservation to article 9, paragraph 2, had officially been withdrawn. There were no plans to withdraw the reservations to articles 2 and 16, but the delegation had taken note of Ms. Gabr's suggestion that the Government might work with other Islamic countries with that possibility in mind. Aligning domestic law with international women's rights obligations was a challenge common to Islamic countries which, in the current context of social unrest, needed to be broached with caution.

40. **Ms. Hamrit** (Algeria) said that regulating the activities of NGOs was part of Algeria's democratization process. There was no specific ban on the financing of NGOs, but associations were obliged to go through a certification process. Financial assistance was included in national and local budgets; in kind donations were not regulated or subject to customs levies when earmarked for humanitarian needs, and NGOs also enjoyed other rights, such as the use of public property as stipulated under Decree No. 93-156.

41. **Mr. Jazaïry** (Algeria) said that the objective of the law on associations was to ensure transparency in the funding of NGOs. The Government was keen to ensure that associations had access to all the material and financial resources they needed to fulfil their missions. The gender quotas applied to both electoral lists and the make-up of councils.

42. **Ms. Patten** said that, although abundant information had been provided on the implementation of the national strategy to combat violence against women, she was disappointed by the absence of details on what had been done to assist victims of rape and other acts of sexual violence committed by members of armed groups. Information would be appreciated on any investigations of reported cases of sexual violence, prosecutions of such cases and their outcomes, medical, psychological and social rehabilitation services and victim compensation. She would like to know why a specific law on domestic violence was not currently envisioned, how responsive the judiciary was to cases of domestic violence, how the Government was addressing the social and structural barriers to the diligent processing of such cases, and what measures were being implemented to enhance

cooperation with NGOs in that area. She asked what concrete steps had been taken to follow up on the recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur to establish a comprehensive data-collection system; adopt specific legislation; provide for civil and criminal remedies; reinforce the infrastructure for the effective protection of women victims of violence; and provide training and conduct awareness-raising campaigns. She also asked how the Government was addressing, or intending to address, the gaps and loopholes in the Criminal Code and to introduce clear definitions of rape and sexual harassment.

43. **Ms. Rasekh** said that, while she was aware of the challenges posed by civil unrest and applauded the reforms put in place to promote the empowerment of women, there was an evident gap between legislation on women's rights and the effective enjoyment of women's rights. The deconstruction of gender stereotypes was contingent on Government efforts to raise awareness and change attitudes about gender roles. She asked what measures were in place to change societal attitudes that led to the stigmatization of women who lived alone.

44. **Ms. Gabr** said that trafficking in persons was a transnational crime that concerned all countries. Since education was crucial to the prevention and prosecution of trafficking, she would like to know what training was provided to the judiciary, law enforcement officers and diplomatic personnel with a view to helping them to understand the scope of the problem and to protect both foreign nationals trafficked through Algeria and Algerian migrants vulnerable to exploitation abroad.

45. **Ms. Benmansour** (Algeria) said that Algeria did not have recourse to customary law. Although the country's Family Code drew upon sharia law, its legislation remained positive law all the same. It was true that Algeria did not yet have a specific law on violence against women or domestic violence. However, violence was punished, regardless of whether the offence was committed by a man or a woman. There were almost 100 articles in the Criminal Code that dealt specifically with different forms of violence, including domestic violence and physical and mental abuse. Progress had been made in that area since 2005. There were stricter penalties for acts of violence, including life imprisonment for some offences involving premeditation or conspiracy, and the offence of family abandonment, for example, could carry a sentence of up to 3 years' imprisonment. The Criminal Code had been amended to make sexual harassment an offence punishable by imprisonment. Algeria had a "zero tolerance" policy on domestic violence. It did not recognize so-called "honour crimes". All violent acts were automatically prosecuted, even if no complaint had been lodged. Efforts had been made to raise awareness among judges about the deterrent effect of sanctions.

46. Trafficking in persons was a criminal offence punishable by a term of penal servitude. Although the crime of marital rape was not specified in the Criminal Code as such, any act of sexual penetration involving the use of physical force, regardless of whether it was committed by a spouse or other person, was considered to be rape under the law.

47. Workshops were held regularly to heighten awareness among the judiciary about violence against women. Violence against women and women's rights would also be covered in training programmes for magistrates. Some 200 Algerian magistrates had received human rights training in countries such as France, Belgium and the United States of America, and those magistrates trained others upon their return to the country. Prison staff were also trained in the protection of human rights and women's rights, in particular.

48. **Ms. Houacine** (Algeria) said that a national survey had been conducted on violence against women. The survey results might not reflect the actual situation, however, as many women did not report acts of violence. She agreed that legislation was not enough to stop violence against women. Efforts must also be made to educate people about women's rights

and to change people's attitudes. Through the national strategy to combat violence against women, the Government had sought to raise awareness among families, at schools and in the media about human rights and equality between men and women. A database on violence against women that had been piloted in a few institutions included entries on the identities of the victims and their assailants, the kinds of violence sustained, the outcome of such attacks, the results of investigations, the prosecution and punishment of such offences and the care provided to women victims. A user manual for the database had been drafted.

49. **Ms. Hamrit** (Algeria) said that trafficking in persons was a criminal offence that entailed severe penalties under Act No. 08-11, which dealt with the entry, movements and presence of foreign nationals in Algeria.

50. **Mr. Saadi** (Algeria) said that it was clear that human trafficking was not unique to Algeria. The Government had worked with international partners and taken steps to criminalize the practice in accordance with the Trafficking Protocol, to which it was a party. Support had also been provided to victims of trafficking. The judiciary and the police had received training on the issue, and the Protocol was applied in Algerian courts.

51. Gender stereotypes were gradually disappearing, thanks to the new school curricula that had been introduced. Textbooks had also been revised so that women and girls were presented in a way that made it clear that men and women, boys and girls, were equal. Stereotyped images of divorced or single women were also being done away with. Some 50 per cent of university students were women. The parliament of Algeria took part in awareness-raising campaigns and had set aside a day to debate the issue of women's equality.

52. **Ms. Murillo de la Vega**, noting that trafficking often went hand in hand with prostitution, said that she would like to know what the Government's position on the punishment of clients of prostitutes was. She also asked whether there was a witness protection programme for women who testified about the gangs and organizations involved in human trafficking or forced prostitution. There was a need for a specific law on violence against women, especially for a country that had passed through some very dark periods in its history. She wondered whether there were plans to set up a committee to provide for reparations to women for the violence that they had suffered during the decade of civil conflict that Algeria had endured.

53. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her capacity as an expert, said that, in connection with the criminalization of family abandonment under Algerian law, she would like to know whether the judiciary and police had been made aware that women were sometimes compelled to abandon their households out of fear for their lives. Would such women be punished under the law? Philosophers and sociologists should be involved in addressing stereotypical cultural patterns. The fact that, in the Family Code, it was assumed that the head of household was male was a stark example of the continued lack of equality between men and women in the family. She would appreciate hearing the delegation's views of what could be done to address the issue.

54. **Ms. Rasekh**, noting the Government's expressions of concern over violence against women, asked what obstacles there were to the adoption of a specific law on such violence and on sexual harassment in the workplace. There were only two or three shelters for victims of violence. It was not clear why there were not more or why there were no shelters for victims of trafficking. She asked how long efforts had been being made to eliminate gender stereotyping from the school curriculum and at which levels of education. She would appreciate knowing when the data-collection system mentioned by the delegation would become operative.

55. **Ms. Benmansour** (Algeria) said that, while prostitution did exist in Algeria, there were no organized prostitution rings. That said, a witness protection programme was indeed envisaged and there were penalties for threatening or intimidating witnesses.

56. Turning to an earlier question concerning magistrates' failure to apply the law properly, she said that while the judiciary was fully independent, monitoring mechanisms were in place to ensure that justice was administered in accordance with the law. Furthermore, judgements could always be appealed. Awareness-raising campaigns about violence against women and the new provisions in the Family Code were being conducted.

57. The previous Family Code had indeed provided that a woman must obey her husband, his parents and even his family members. That article no longer existed and a new article had been introduced stipulating that husbands and wives had the same rights and obligations, thereby doing away with the implied notion in the Family Code that heads of household were male. A bill on sexual harassment in the workplace was currently being discussed. The Family Code had been amended to eliminate stereotypes of women wherever possible in areas in which Islamic law prevailed. Under the previous Code, a woman could be deprived of custody of her children if she worked. Under the current Code, that right could not be taken away. Indeed, women were encouraged to work. It was true, however, that the articles concerning inheritance were a sensitive subject. The issue of women's inheritance under sharia law was problematic in all Muslim countries, as the relevant provisions were imperative and it was very difficult to depart from them.

58. **Ms. Moussaoui** (Algeria) said that there were currently two women's shelters in Algeria and that the establishment of another was planned. One of the shelters had been opened in 1998 during the period of terrorism. Although the other had 40 beds, there were only three women currently residing in it, and there was thus ample room for victims. There were also some 45 youth shelters throughout the country for persons under 18 years of age and 32 national centres for persons over the age of 60. Women in the shelters received proper care, as they were run by highly qualified specialists who reported to the Ministry of National Solidarity and the Family. The shelters sought to reintegrate women into society through vocational training and other forms of rehabilitation. In addition, there were counselling centres staffed by psychologists, sociologists, legal specialists and doctors in all 48 provinces.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.