



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

Distr.: General
3 November 2015

English only

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women
Sixty-second session**

Summary record of the 1337th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 28 October 2015, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Hayashi

Contents

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

Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Portugal

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of the present document* to the English Translation Section, room E.6040, Palais des Nations, Geneva (trad_sec_eng@unog.ch).

Any corrections to the records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

GE.15-18902 (E) 301015 031115



Please recycle 



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

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

Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Portugal (CEDAW/C/PRT/8-9, CEDAW/C/PRT/Q/8-9 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Portugal took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Bártolo** (Portugal), introducing the State party report (CEDAW/C/PRT/8-9), said that the Portuguese National Human Rights Committee cooperated closely with civil society. Work had recently been carried out on the development of national human rights indicators in order to better assess the efficacy of national human rights policies. The matrix of indicators on the success achieved in preventing and combating violence against women was nearing completion, and work on a new matrix on non-discrimination was under way.

3. In recent years, Portugal had been overtaken by an economic crisis and had subsequently been obliged to introduce austerity measures. The Government was aware of the negative impact of such measures on the human rights situation in Portugal, but it remained committed to the protection of human rights, particularly for vulnerable groups in society. The Government's national and international political agenda had placed increasing emphasis on combating gender-based discrimination and promoting women's social inclusion. A wide range of instruments had been introduced to promote equality, including the Fifth National Plan for Equality. Portugal had redoubled its efforts to promote gender equality through a range of measures which included sectoral plans in ministries and municipalities, training on gender equality for civil servants and strengthened cooperation with NGOs.

4. The balanced presence of women and men in political and economic decision-making positions was recognized as a requisite of democratic governance. Since the adoption of the Parity Law in 2006, the number of women elected to decision-making positions had continued to grow. The same trend had been seen in the economic decision-making posts occupied by women. A raft of measures had been implemented to promote that trend, including an awareness-raising campaign and an agreement between the Government and 13 companies that were listed on the stock exchange to promote a greater gender balance on their boards of directors. Efforts to promote women's employment and entrepreneurship included professional training schemes, financial support programmes and the sharing of good practices. Legislation had been adopted to foster gender equality in the labour market, establish the principle of equal pay for work of equal value and encourage employers to recruit low-skilled women workers. Legislation in support of a work-life balance provided for extended, shared parental leave, penalties for employers who did not renew contracts of pregnant women or with new or nursing mothers without first informing the Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment (CITE) and mechanisms for preventing workers with young children from being penalized in terms of their career opportunities.

5. Measures for the prevention of violence against women included the Fifth Plan to Prevent and Combat Domestic and Gender-Based Violence, awareness-raising activities and training on the protection of the rights of victims, increased surveillance of perpetrators of such violence and the criminalization of genital mutilation as part of an effort to strengthen the legal framework for the protection and defence of the rights of women. In recent years Portugal had reinforced the institutional support provided to victims of domestic violence. Specialized care centres for victims had been established, measures had been introduced to promote the social inclusion of victims,

and initiatives had been launched to support the reintegration of victims into the labour market. Another step taken to prevent domestic violence had been the establishment of parameters for use by health-care providers to assess the level of risk existing within the family during children's medical appointments.

6. The national information system on human trafficking had recently been updated, and the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings, which had been established in 2008, contributed to the identification of potential victims. In addition, multidisciplinary teams were in place to provide specialized assistance to victims. In 2013, a protocol on support and protection for victims had been introduced which called for cooperation between various public institutions and NGOs. Anti-trafficking materials prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime that focused on mounting an effective response to new challenges in the field of human trafficking had been translated into Portuguese and disseminated.

7. Despite the recent economic crisis, Portugal had maintained a high standard of maternal and child health services. Its maternal mortality rate was one of the lowest in Europe, and the child mortality rate was one of the lowest in the world. The country's success in that area was attributable to a number of measures, including a child and maternal health programme, ready access to family planning services and free contraceptives, an increase in the percentage of deliveries attended by qualified health-care professionals and measures that had reduced abortion-related risks. The National Health Service was open to all residents, including irregular migrants, and vulnerable groups were exempted from paying medical fees.

8. Since 2011, the Government had redoubled its efforts to mobilize non-governmental organizations and to ensure the effective participation of health professionals, police officers and child protection authorities in combating female genital mutilation. A study had recently been published on the prevalence of that practice in Portugal, and its results would be used as a basis for the development of effective action strategies in that area.

9. Awareness-raising campaigns on gender discrimination and stereotypes were being conducted, teacher's manuals on gender and citizenship had been distributed, and specialized training schemes on the avoidance of gender stereotyping were offered for journalists and media professionals and students. Women and gender studies modules had been developed, and the Fifth National Plan for Equality provided for the promotion of research in the field of gender studies.

10. Portugal continued to support vulnerable groups, such as rural, immigrant and Roma women. Plans to support the integration of migrant women included measures to promote women's empowerment and gender equality, as did the National Strategy for the Integration of Roma Communities. Measures to support rural women included investment in agricultural enterprises run by women with the help of co-financing from the Rural Development Programme of the European Commission. The Government remained unequivocally committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and hoped to learn valuable lessons from its dialogue with the Committee.

Articles 1 to 6

11. **Mr. Bruun** said that, while the Committee understood the difficult situation that Portugal faced and the consequent need for spending cuts, the austerity measures had had a devastating impact on women and progress towards gender equality. The State party had to meet its obligations under the Convention regardless of the country's economic circumstances. He would be interested in learning what gender mainstreaming measures the State party was implementing and wondered whether

there was a clear awareness of the fact that austerity measures should be temporary and commensurate with the scale of the crisis and should not disproportionately affect women or vulnerable groups. Had the State party considered turning to the European Union for assistance or support in fulfilling its treaty obligations? He would appreciate it if the delegation would explain the reasons behind the gender blindness of the Government's austerity policies. Clarification on the implementation of the Convention in the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira would also be useful to the Committee.

12. Although he understood that the Convention could be directly applied by the courts, there were concerns that there was insufficient awareness of its provisions. Could the State party provide specific examples of cases in which the Convention had been invoked in court? How was instruction about the provisions of the Convention integrated into the curricula of law faculties and into the specialized training provided to judicial officials?

13. In view of the refugee crisis in Europe, he would be interested to learn more about the time frame for the implementation of the Asylum Law adopted in 2014, which would introduce provisions designed to ensure that female asylum seekers' needs were fully met. Information would also be appreciated on any other measures that the Government planned to take in order to ensure gender-sensitive treatment of female refugees.

14. **Mr. Bártolo** (Portugal) said that the Government had done everything in its power to mitigate the austerity measures' adverse impact on the human rights situation and to protect vulnerable groups. It was committed to ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights as it strove to strike a balance between its obligations under the Convention, European Union regulations and the austerity measures imposed on Portugal. It was important to recall that member States of the European Union were not at liberty to make certain types of decisions on their own. The Committee might wish to discuss the matter with European Union institutions themselves in order to obtain further information regarding the reasoning behind certain policies.

15. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal), speaking on the apparent gender blindness of austerity policies, said that steps had been taken since 2012 to maintain the level of investment in the implementation of policies to promote gender equality and combat violence against women. A separate source of funding had been established for that purpose and for the implementation of measures to combat human trafficking and domestic violence.

16. **Mr. Albano** (Portugal) said that the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG) evaluated all of the Government's gender equality policies. The support provided to refugees did not incorporate a gender perspective as such, but instead focused on refugees' specific needs on a case-by-case basis within the framework of a human rights approach. Refugees were not placed in administrative detention. The Portuguese Council for Refugees, a civil society organization, was also involved in addressing the specific cultural and other needs of each group of arrivals and worked to help refugees and asylum seekers integrate into Portuguese society by providing them with access to language courses and other types of education.

17. **Ms. Cancela Carvalho** (Portugal) said that training for judges and prosecutors in matters relating to gender equality started in the law faculties, as the subject was part of the university syllabus on constitutional law and public international law. In addition, members of each branch of the legal profession were given specialized training by the Centre for Judicial Studies (CEJ). In the past two years, joint training activities on the implementation of the Convention had been undertaken by the Centre and parliament. The training programmes covered specific issues such as female

genital mutilation and domestic violence and, in the forthcoming biennium, the training plan would also cover human trafficking. It was her understanding that statistics were not readily available on the citation of the Convention in court proceedings, as rulings were classified and were indexed as civil or criminal judgements and by type of offence.

18. **Ms. Silva** (Portugal) said that, nevertheless, the Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality had carried out a qualitative study on the sentences handed down by courts in some 500 cases of domestic violence between 2010 and 2013 and had found that the Convention had been frequently cited by legal counsel. An effort would be made to obtain the exact figures.

19. **Mr. Maio** (Portugal) said that the Ministry of Finance was conducting preliminary studies on gender-sensitive budgeting. While the project was still in its early stages, he would obtain more detailed information from his department and forward it to the Committee as soon as possible.

20. **Ms. Chamiça** (Portugal) said that gender was a factor that was duly taken into account in asylum procedures under the Asylum Law, which, as amended in 2014, made provision for special consideration to be given to women asylum seekers, particularly pregnant women and those with young children. They were not, for example, held in the temporary shelters provided at the borders for other asylum seekers.

21. **Ms. Gíria** (Portugal) said that since 2011 the Government had been required by law to report to parliament every year on gender equality in the workplace and in employment. Its report always made reference to the Convention. The Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment also made frequent reference to the Convention in its reports.

22. **Ms. Sancha Marques Ferreira** (Portugal) said that the Autonomous Region of Madeira was fully committed to all the goals and objectives set forth in the Convention. Any plans or programmes adopted on the mainland, such as the latest plan to combat domestic and gender-based violence, were adapted in line with the somewhat different circumstances of that small island territory and given full implementation. One priority objective was to combat exclusion of all kinds based on a positive approach to achieving inclusion and encouraging women to participate in all spheres of society.

23. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal) said that a gender impact assessment was mandatory for all bills submitted to the parliament, and all legislation had to contain inclusive language. Every effort was made to ensure that the mechanisms needed to implement the Convention were in place. In short, the State party remained committed to the spirit and letter of the Convention, notwithstanding the constraints under which it was currently labouring.

24. **Mr. Bruun** said that he was glad to see that the Convention was a living instrument in the State party. He wondered whether the Committee's general recommendations were translated into Portuguese. He was similarly encouraged by the implementation process in Madeira and would like to know if the Convention was implemented in the same way in the Azores Autonomous Region.

25. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal) said that the Azores had taken up many of the Committee's recommendations. The State party's report contained information on the implementation of the Convention in that autonomous region.

26. **Ms. Andreia Marques** (Portugal) said that in 2012, CIG had produced a manual on the use of the Convention which included translations of the Convention and of many of the Committee's recommendations. That manual explained how to draw up

shadow reports and submit individual complaints to the Committee. In many cases, preambles to national plans referred to the Committee's recommendations, which were used as guidelines for the implementation of those plans.

27. **Ms. Ávila** (Portugal) said that the Attorney General's Office did an excellent job of translating the Committee's recommendations and ensuring that they were widely disseminated.

28. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that it was important to bear in mind that gender impact assessments needed to be applied across the board. The aim should be to evaluate the impact of measures not just in terms of gender-based violence or domestic violence, for example, but to foresee any potentially unequal gender-based impacts in areas such as education, health and social security. A recent report by the Ombudsman had been quite critical of the Government in that regard, which led her to wonder whether the State party actually undertook gender impact assessments that covered all spheres of activity.

29. The State party report contained disturbing information to the effect that the CIG budget had been cut in recent years to levels that seemed rather low for a national body of its kind: greater resources seemed to be allocated to youth affairs, for example. She would appreciate receiving information on the relative spheres of authority and powers of CIG and of CITE as compared with other government bodies. Was CIG able to bring legal proceedings, for example, and did it have powers of enforcement? If not, the absence of such powers would be a serious weakness in a body responsible for the promotion of gender equality. In its previous concluding observations (CEDAW/C/PRT/CO/7), the Committee had said that it did not have a clear picture as to the level of authority existing among the gender focal points, or "equality advisers", within government ministries. The Committee had received no further information on that subject and was still unsure as to the relationship between the equality advisers in ministries and CIG. She would appreciate some clarification on that matter. She would also appreciate information on the relationship between the equality advisers in the country's municipalities and CIG.

30. **Ms. Schulz** said that the measures listed in paragraphs 36 to 38 of the State party's replies to the Committee's list of issues could not accurately be described as temporary special measures. They were certainly very valuable long-term measures, but temporary special measures were ones specifically designed to accelerate progress towards de facto equality and to be dismantled once the situation had improved. As such, they needed to be monitored on the basis of definite targets and time frames. In the case of the increase in representation of women in decision-making positions, useful accompanying measures might include special training for women or the establishment of databases for use by companies wishing to find qualified women. The Committee would also like to know of any sanctions that would apply for failure to meet the targets set for equality in employment, remuneration or representation in decision-making positions. She welcomed the fact that the Government had signed an agreement with major private companies to improve the representation of women on corporate boards. Did the agreement set clear targets and include a system of sanctions? The State party might consider adopting a similar approach to the one used in Norway by making achievement of the targets voluntary in the first instance and imposing a mandatory quota if companies failed to meet them. The State party might give consideration to making deliberate use of temporary special measures in the context of the austerity policies currently being applied and to developing a holistic approach in order to mitigate the negative impact of those policies on women.

31. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal) said that gender impact assessments were not easy exercises to conduct and had not achieved the desired results to date, but methodologies were being developed in order to support lawmakers and make it easier

for them to meet their obligations in that regard. It was true that there had been a drop in the funding allocated to CIG, but there was also separate funding for the development and implementation of individual policies, and the ministries and services represented in the working groups responsible for overseeing the various national plans also had their own budgets. The size of the delegation fielded by the State party showed just how many ministries were working with CIG in putting the law into practice and improving people's daily lives. There had also been substantial Community funding, but €21 million of the overall investment of €64 million in 2008-2015 had been drawn from the national budget, which demonstrated that the Government of Portugal had made a substantial investment in order to prevent funding constraints from undermining victim protection or gender equality. Both CIG and CITE were public administrative services under the Council of Ministers, with competence to receive complaints of violations for referral to the relevant authorities.

32. The purpose of the temporary special measures applied in the State party was to rebalance society at all levels by ensuring that women were represented in all spheres of activity. Equal representation was a principle enshrined in the Constitution and the law, and it was applicable in all areas, including the labour market, decision-making and electoral processes, and provision was made for sanctions to be imposed where necessary. Portugal was attempting to go beyond what was required under the Convention by striving to make permanent, rather than temporary, advances. As to the suggestion that Portugal might follow the example set by Norway, the latest Cabinet decision on gender equality, taken on International Women's Day, 8 March 2015, had set a deadline to move on a voluntary basis towards balanced representation of men and women on the boards of private companies.

33. **Ms. Gíria** (Portugal) said that information on the mandate and composition of CITE could be found in paragraph 28 of the periodic report.

34. **Ms. Andreia Marques** (Portugal) said that ministerial equality advisers were represented on the board of CIG and that some were members of the working group tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Fifth National Plan for Equality. The Commission coordinated the preparation of an annual report on the implementation of the Plan for Equality and of ministerial equality plans. It also provided training to ministerial advisers and signed technical cooperation agreements with municipalities. To date, 147 such agreements had been signed and 152 local equality advisers had been appointed. Since 2013, municipalities had been legally obliged to implement equality plans, and 81 such plans had been developed. CIG had supported many of those plans and, in 2015, had held a meeting with all local advisers in order to exchange information on implementation.

35. **Ms. Ávila** (Portugal) said that the Government drew on the Committee's concluding observations and on its general recommendations, but that the latter were not systematically translated into Portuguese for budgetary reasons.

36. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that she would like further clarification on the role and authority of CITE. In particular, it would be useful to know whether it had the power to institute legal proceedings and to issue binding decisions in cases of workplace discrimination. The Committee would be interested in hearing about the outcome of measures taken within the framework of the independent strategic area on sexual orientation and gender identity that had been included in the Fourth National Plan for Equality.

37. **Ms. Schulz** said that government cuts in expenditure on health care could have a disproportionate impact on women's access to essential services, particularly in rural areas. In relation to the point touched upon by Ms. Duarte earlier, she wished to point out that the Committee was of the view that temporary special measures were not only

compatible with long-term efforts to achieve gender equality but could also contribute significantly to them.

38. **The Chairperson** said that she wished to know why the 2006 Parity Law had been given that name even though it provided that only 33 per cent of candidates on electoral lists for the national parliament, the European Parliament and local elections had to be women.

39. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal) said that the Fourth National Plan for Equality, like all previous plans, had been independently evaluated and that its implementation rate had been very high. The Parity Law had been so named because its ultimate aim was to achieve gender parity. The figure of 33 per cent had been viewed simply as a milestone on the path to the balanced representation of men and women in government bodies.

40. **Ms. Gíria** (Portugal) said that CITE performed advisory functions and mediated disputes related to such issues as gender discrimination at work, the protection of parenthood and the reconciliation of professional and private life. It issued binding legal opinions on a range of matters, including requests for flexitime and part-time working arrangements. If an employer failed to comply with an opinion, the case would be taken to court and a penalty could be imposed. CITE was empowered to institute legal proceedings, particularly through its trade union representatives. If CITE became aware of a possible violation of a legal provision in its area of authority, it passed on all relevant information to a labour inspectorate for further investigation. Other duties of CITE included carrying out its own inspections, providing assistance to victims of workplace discrimination and advising the Government on legislative reforms.

41. **Ms. Andreia Marques** (Portugal) said that all the measures pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity under the Fourth National Plan for Equality had been implemented. One had entailed launching a nationwide campaign in all schools to promote non-discrimination. The Government had supplied municipal and school libraries with reading materials on the subject and had funded training programmes and awareness-raising initiatives. Sexual orientation and gender identity had been included as an independent strategic area in the Fifth National Plan for Equality and, in 2015, the Government had launched its second campaign to combat homophobia and transphobia. The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association was one of the NGOs represented in the working group responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Fifth National Plan.

42. **Ms. Jahan** asked whether the permanent mechanisms referred to in paragraph 46 of the replies to the list of issues had been established and, if not, why not. In that connection, she wished to urge the State party to adopt a comprehensive strategy to address gender stereotypes. In view of reports that some women and girls in Portugal had been subjected to, or were at risk of, female genital mutilation, she wished to underscore the importance of investigating and prosecuting the offence, even when it had been committed abroad.

43. She would be interested in seeing statistics on the numbers of prosecutions brought and convictions handed down in relation to cases of domestic violence and on the number of remote assistance systems that had been set up in the State party, including in the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira. She would like to know where the emergency shelters for victims of domestic violence mentioned in paragraph 64 of the periodic report were located and whether they were adequately staffed and funded. She had noted that the definition of rape in the Criminal Code was not fully in line with the Convention, that there was no rape crisis centre in Portugal and that marital rape was not a stand-alone criminal offence, and she would therefore

like to know what steps were being taken to raise awareness of all forms of violence against women among law enforcement officers and members of the judiciary.

44. She wished to know whether the Government would consider reviewing the recently enacted divorce law, which did not list domestic violence among the grounds for terminating a marriage. That omission could lead to situations in which the commission of that offence would not come to light during divorce proceedings, and that would have ramifications with regard to child custody and the division of assets.

45. She would like to invite the delegation to explain whether policies and legislation on human trafficking were drawn up on the basis of a clearly defined gender perspective and whether NGOs were involved in the planning and implementation of anti-trafficking measures. She would also appreciate information on efforts to raise awareness of victims' rights among law enforcement officers and members of the judiciary and on the distribution of responsibilities among CIG, the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings and the national rapporteur who dealt with that topic. The Committee would like to learn more about the steps being taken to address the demand side and root causes of trafficking in persons, to raise awareness of the dangers of trafficking among vulnerable groups, such as those experiencing socioeconomic difficulties, and to ensure that victim identification was disassociated from criminal investigations and proceedings. She wished to know whether victims were granted renewable residence permits, particularly when they were initially unable to cooperate with the authorities.

46. On the subject of prostitution, it would be helpful to receive statistics on the numbers of related investigations, prosecutions and convictions. Any information on initiatives to reduce the demand for prostitution and on specific programmes to support women wishing to escape prostitution would also be welcome.

47. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal) said that the Government was keenly aware of the power of the media to influence public opinion and that CIG awarded a prize to media outlets that had made a telling contribution to the promotion of gender equality. The Criminal Code had recently been amended to ensure compliance with the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Historically, divorce laws in Portugal had provided for a no-fault system in which spouses could request a divorce on the grounds of irreconcilable differences. It had been felt that such an approach would afford greater protection to victims of domestic violence as it was sometimes difficult to prove the occurrence of abuse. As for a Committee member's earlier question about the legal status of prostitution, she could say that, while prostitution was not a criminal offence, it was not considered to be a productive activity and, consequently, the Government did not wish to create an environment that was conducive to it.

48. **Ms. Andreia Marques** (Portugal) said that the overarching objective of CIG over the past 40 years had been to dismantle gender stereotypes. For over 30 years, all of its activities, training events and programmes for a range of different audiences had been based on a clearly defined strategy for combating such stereotypes. Handbooks and study guides on citizenship and gender had been produced for use in preschools and in primary and secondary schools. A total of 38 trainers grouped into 19 different teams had provided over 1,110 hours of intensive training in that subject area to around 850 teachers throughout Portugal, including in the Azores and Madeira, in addition to e-learning training. CIG had worked in partnership with a number of other bodies, including a training centre for journalists and several universities, to provide training on the elimination of gender stereotypes in the media. No specific information was as yet available on the training to be provided to the teams that were to monitor media content, as the corresponding measures had been introduced only very recently.

49. **Mr. Almeida** (Portugal) said that in August 2015 a law had been enacted that defined female genital mutilation as a specific crime, in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). That law explicitly addressed all forms of female genital mutilation, in line with the definitions used by the World Health Organization. A preventive approach had been adopted that was aimed at raising awareness of the consequences of the practice among vulnerable groups. Efforts had also been directed towards producing guidelines for police officers, health professionals and others who worked with vulnerable young people. Portugal had been cooperating closely with Guinea-Bissau, which was a high-risk country in terms of the practice of female genital mutilation. That initiative had included the dissemination of CIG publications on the subject in Guinea-Bissau.

50. **Ms. Casas** (Portugal) said that, in line with the extraterritorial application of the Asylum Law, a recent amendment had the effect of classifying victims of female genital mutilation as being in need of special care.

51. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal) said that a number of ministries were represented in the working group that was supporting the efforts of CIG to implement the First National Action Programme for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation. Cases of female genital mutilation could be documented in the national health system, and those records made it possible to gauge the extent of the practice in Portugal.

52. **Ms. Pereira** (Portugal) said that three postgraduate courses on sexual and reproductive health and female genital mutilation had been given in Lisbon and Setúbal, cities with large migrant communities. There was a plan to set up working groups of health professionals who would act as focal points to provide training to their colleagues in their respective medical institutions about the practice of female genital mutilation. A total of 85 cases of female genital mutilation had been registered as of September 2015. In most cases they related to type one or two mutilations and had been performed abroad, primarily on women of Guinea-Bissau.

53. **Ms. Silva** (Portugal) said that the number of domestic violence reports received by the police had remained fairly stable since 2008. The number of convictions in domestic violence cases was trending steadily upward, rising from 132 in 2008 to 1,769 in 2013. A similar upward trend had been recorded both in the number of victims of domestic violence using the remote assistance and protection system and in the number of defendants and convicted persons being monitored under the electronic surveillance system. There had been no cuts in the budget for the 37 shelters located throughout Portugal, which were managed by NGOs but financed entirely by the Government. Additional funds had been allocated to assist women who wanted to leave the shelters and to upgrade the shelters' infrastructure. The occupancy rate for those shelters had remained at around 98 per cent and, while there were no plans to expand their capacity, additional room in emergency shelters had been made available. All law enforcement agencies used the same domestic violence risk assessment tool, which was in line with international standards. In 2014, approximately 15,000 police and military officers had received training in the use of a new methodology for the analysis and registration of domestic violence cases.

54. Work remained to be done to provide victims of sexual violence with psychological support. Over 3,000 expert examinations of female victims and over 700 of male victims had been carried out by the National Institute of Legal Medicine since 2012. Guidelines on the handling of sexual violence cases had been included in a manual designed for health professionals that had been issued in 2014. Procedures for maintaining confidentiality and preserving evidence were included in those guidelines.

55. **Ms. Cancela Carvalho** (Portugal) said that the risk assessment tool was designed for use in the initial identification of cases in which people were at risk of domestic violence and in subsequent reassessments of those risks. All police and military officers involved in domestic violence cases had received intensive training in use of the tool. Awareness-raising campaigns had also been carried out in primary and secondary schools.

56. **Mr. Albano** (Portugal) said that a gender perspective had been mainstreamed into all anti-trafficking policies since the creation of the First National Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings. Cooperation with civil society had played a vital role in the design stage of the National Plan and continued to do so in its implementation. Portugal had a national information system that was of great value in coordinating anti-trafficking efforts. The responsibilities of each governmental and private organization, including the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings, in relation to the identification of victims of human trafficking were clearly defined and did not overlap but rather complemented one another. Campaigns had been carried out annually by the Government since 2008 to raise awareness of the different forms of human trafficking and trafficking networks' exploitation of migrant labour in agriculture.

57. The Asylum Law provided for special protection to be afforded to particularly vulnerable persons. There was a special European fund in place for the assisted return of victims of human trafficking. The number of convictions for the procurement of prostitution involving the exploitation of adults had been around 100 per year, while 6 persons had been convicted in 2013 and another 6 in 2014 for the procurement of minors to engage in prostitution.

58. **Ms. Duarte** (Portugal), responding to a question that had been posed earlier, said that prostitution was not a crime in Portugal; nor was the solicitation of prostitution, and there were no plans to make either of those activities a criminal offence.

Articles 7 to 9

59. **Ms. Schulz** said that she would like to know if the Parity Law was to be amended to introduce effective gender parity, which was understood as fifty-fifty representation and, if so, in what time frame. Were there plans to introduce more effective sanctions, such as the invalidation of all electoral lists that did not comply with the law? With regard to the Madeira and Azores autonomous regions, she would be interested in the delegation's views as to what the central government could do to encourage those regions to adopt and implement parity legislation. Women were underrepresented in executive functions, especially at the local level. Had consideration been given to other means of promoting equal participation at all levels of government? While the State party was to be commended on the fact that 55 per cent of all judges were, women, they were nonetheless starkly underrepresented at some of the highest levels of the judiciary, such as the Supreme Court and other senior bodies. That was also true of the more senior levels of the civil and diplomatic services. What practical measures had been adopted to address that situation by supporting the entry of women into those career paths and their subsequent promotion? Had measures of that sort been taken in State-owned companies and the private sector? With reference to paragraph 36 of the State party's replies to the list of issues (CEDAW/C/PRT/Q/8-9/Add.1), she would like to know what happened following the Government's annual evaluation of the numbers of women in decision-making positions in State-owned and private companies.

60. **Ms. Jahan** said that, on the subject of female genital mutilation, she would like to know what happened to persons who had encouraged victims to travel abroad to undergo the procedure upon the victims' return to Portugal. Were health professionals

in private practice also required to record cases of female genital mutilation? Did the guidelines on rape that had been introduced in 2014 cover the preservation of forensic evidence?

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.