



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

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

**Summary record of the 1359th meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 12 November 2015, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Hayashi

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*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 fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovakia (CEDAW/C/SVK/5-6; CEDAW/C/SVK/Q/5-6 and Add.1)*

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

2. **Mr. Rosocha** (Slovakia), introducing the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovakia (CEDAW/C/SVK/5-6), said that the principle of non-discrimination was enshrined in Act No. 365/2004, the Anti-Discrimination Act, and covered discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion or belief, race, nationality or ethnic origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital and family status, colour, language, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and whistleblowing. Gender discrimination covered discrimination against pregnant women or mothers, and discrimination on grounds of gender identity. The Act also emphasized the need for positive measures to ensure protection against discrimination. The National Action Plan for Gender Equality and the National Strategy for Gender Equality included measures to promote economic empowerment and participation in decision-making processes, education, institutional mechanisms and international cooperation. They had been drawn up in cooperation with NGOs and the Government Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality, which was a permanent professional advisory, coordinating and consultative body, responsible for promoting the principle of equal treatment and equality, including gender equality. The Council comprised several specialized committees, including a committee on gender equality.

3. In order to strengthen the institutional mechanism for gender equality, parliament had adopted a bill transferring competence for gender equality and equal opportunities to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family. The Ministry's Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities was responsible for coordinating the national policy on gender and for mainstreaming gender issues. It also played a role in coordinating the implementation of gender equality and anti-discrimination principles across all operational programmes under European structural funds. Since the start of 2015, the Department had operated under the direct authority of the Minister, and its human resources had been increased. The Department was in charge of the national Institute for Gender Equality project, whose aim was to establish efficient mechanisms and instruments to implement gender equality in practice, to raise awareness and strengthen the expertise of the relevant stakeholders in preventing and eliminating gender inequality. A nationwide campaign had been implemented, focusing on the gender pay gap and gender stereotyping and their impact on men and women in society.

4. To prevent gender-based violence, the Government had adopted a national action plan for 2014-2019. As part of that plan, the Coordinating Methodological Centre for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence had been established in 2015 to draft and implement a comprehensive national policy. A team of experts in the Centre was responsible for coordinating and monitoring the system to prevent and eliminate violence against women, as well as providing support services, managing multi-agency cooperation activities, and research and monitoring. The Centre also provided training on gender-based and domestic violence to law enforcement agents, judicial staff and health-care professionals, in cooperation with the Council of Europe and other partners. It was responsible for evaluating current

legislation on violence against women and domestic violence, and helped draft new legislative measures and strategies.

5. The first draft of a bill on the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence and domestic violence had been submitted for public consultation in June 2015. Work on the bill would continue until consensus was reached.

6. The Ministry of Labour had set up a free 24-hour helpline for victims of violence against women. The priority was to ensure the safety of victims and their children. The Office of the General Prosecutor had also launched a free helpline and e-mail address for reporting incidents. The information would then be passed on to the relevant police department.

7. At the regional level, the Slovak Republic had signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), and was now bringing domestic law into line with that Convention. Ratification was expected by June 2016.

8. As part of its affirmative action strategy, the Ministry of Labour had launched a project entitled "Family and Work" to promote the employment of women with young children. Measures included support for employers in setting up flexible child care facilities, in order to help women back into the labour force. The response from employers had been very positive.

9. In order to prevent Roma women and women from poor communities making uninformed health choices, the Ministry of Health had rolled out the Healthy Communities project, with funding from European Union structural funds. Health workers monitored Roma settlements, providing basic health education. Information was also disseminated on disease prevention, preventive health checks and compulsory vaccination programmes, as well as basic hygiene, reproductive and sexual health, and the care of newborn babies.

10. The Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities had begun its work in 2013 by implementing a project to integrate Roma children into early childhood education, empower families, improve the relationship between parents and teachers and prepare children for the transition into the compulsory education system.

#### *Articles 1 to 6*

11. **Ms. Pomeranzi** said that the Anti-Discrimination Act seemed to apply mainly to the fields of labour law, social security and health care, and did not necessarily cover all the grounds for discrimination under the Convention. She asked whether the State party could provide more information on the enforcement of anti-discrimination policies, including the new amendments to the Act. She said she would like information on the application of the Convention and its principles by the courts. How often had the Convention been invoked in gender discrimination cases? What training on the Convention had been provided to judges?

12. With regard to the work of the National Centre for Human Rights, she observed that statistical data indicated a very low level of activity in the area of gender equality, as only 3 per cent of the cases reported in 2014 related to gender discrimination. She asked how the new national human rights strategy adopted in 2015 was tackling discrimination against women.

13. **Ms. Pimentel** said that reports indicated that domestic courts were still reluctant to award financial compensation to victims of discrimination and tended to downplay the impact of discrimination on human dignity. In certain instances, there was some bias shown by the courts, for example in cases involving Roma women. What was the Government doing to tackle those problems and to address delays in access to justice?

She asked what specific support the National Human Rights Centre provided in order to facilitate women's access to justice, particularly for women exposed to multiple forms of discrimination, such as those from minority communities or Roma women. Did the State party support the Centre's work in that area? She asked whether it would be possible for the Centre to carry out periodic reviews of the independence, efficiency and transparency of the judicial system, in the context of women's rights. What measures were being taken to fully implement the National Strategy for Gender Equality and the corresponding Action Plan?

14. **Mr. Filčík** (Slovakia) said that the Anti-Discrimination Act applied to a range of fields, including employment, health care, social services and insurance, education, and goods and services. In addition, the Constitution contained a general prohibition of discrimination. The Act was a rather new piece of legislation, which could explain why there were difficulties with its implementation in court. The National Centre for Human Rights was the national human rights institution and had a broad mandate. The Government had pledged to reform the Centre and provide improved funding for its activities by the summer of 2016.

15. On the issue of access to justice and the award of compensation by the courts, he said that the Government was aware of the problem, and planned to amend the Anti-Discrimination Act in 2016. Delays in access to justice and the backlog in court cases were a problem throughout the judicial system and were not specific to discrimination cases. Various measures were planned to expedite court proceedings. A new Code of Civil Procedure was due to come into force in 2016, and steps were being taken to digitize court documents. The Centre had a mandate to deal with multiple discrimination, but its limited budget and the broad scope of its work meant that it might not always be able to handle all the applications for assistance it received.

16. In 2015 a public consultation process had been launched on a new action plan to tackle all forms of discrimination. The scope of the plan was very broad, but focused particularly on education, institutional support, training for ministries and courts, and data collection.

17. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the Slovak authorities tended to apply national anti-discrimination legislation rather than the Convention. However, the 2008 concluding observations of the Committee (CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/4) had been taken into account when introducing preliminary affirmative action measures. Depending on their nature, complaints of gender-based discrimination could be filed with the National Centre for Human Rights or the Labour Inspectorate. In 2013 the Inspectorate had uncovered 44 breaches of the Labour Code, many of which had been related to equal pay issues. Where possible, cases were resolved through facilitation and mediation rather than through the courts. Complaints of discriminatory conduct on the part of public authorities could be filed with the Public Defender of Rights. In general, complaints involved discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability, or in some cases multiple discrimination.

18. The National Strategy for Gender Equality made provision for institutional mechanisms to promote gender equality and enforce compliance with the principle of equal treatment under the Anti-Discrimination Act. All public investment programmes financed through the European Union structural funds were required to comply with the Act.

19. **Mr. Filčík** (Slovakia) said that the Government-funded Legal Aid Centre had offices across the country and provided free legal aid and representation to economically disadvantaged persons, including Roma women.

20. **Ms. Pomeranzi** said that the Anti-Discrimination Act was a tool for the promotion of gender equality, rather than an end in itself. A plethora of action plans

and committees actually made it harder to be sure that there was any real political will to promote a policy of gender equality in line with articles 1 and 2 of the Convention — which was not, she emphasized, the same as equal opportunity.

21. **Ms. Pimentel** said that gender was a major component in multiple or intersectional forms of discrimination, which were widespread in the State party. She asked whether mediation was used to resolve cases involving violence and whether the National Centre for Human Rights was empowered to carry out periodic reviews of the autonomy, efficiency and transparency of the judicial system when dealing with women's rights and multiple forms of discrimination.

22. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** asked what accreditation status had been given to the National Centre for Human Rights by the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. She asked whether the Centre's annual budget was ring-fenced and whether procedures had been put in place to safeguard the political independence of its staff.

23. **Ms. Hofmeister** asked what the Slovak authorities were doing to tackle the widespread multiple discrimination suffered by Roma women in the State party.

24. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that mediation was used only in civil cases of discrimination that did not involve violence. Specialized units had been set up to provide support for women with disabilities, Roma women and single mothers affected by gender-based discrimination. The Human Resources operational programme made provision for marginalized Roma communities.

25. **Mr. Filčík** (Slovakia) said that the National Centre for Human Rights was empowered to carry out reviews of the judicial system and the courts, and other judicial bodies and State agencies were obliged by law to provide it with information on their application of the principle of equal treatment and human rights. In March 2014, the Centre had been granted "B" accreditation status by the International Coordinating Committee. Part of the Centre's budget was ring-fenced; it received its funding from the Ministry of Finance. A number of the members of the executive board of the Centre were political appointees and members could freely join or continue to be members of political parties.

26. **Mr. Hero** (Slovakia) said that the National Roma Integration Strategy had been adopted in 2012. As part of the Strategy, action plans on cross-cutting issues, such as financial inclusion and non-discrimination, were prepared. The 2011-2015 Revised National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 had been adopted in 2011 and focused on the elimination of discrimination against Roma women in access to education, employment, accommodation and health-care services. A revised Integration Strategy and an updated National Action Plan would be transmitted to the Government for adoption once they were completed. As part of that process, measures had been taken on multiple discrimination and the provision of information to marginalized Roma communities.

27. **Ms. Pomeranzi** asked for additional information on the effective functioning of the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities and its relations with the Committee for Gender Equality of the Council for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality. She asked whether the Department and the Committee were in a position to provide support for the National Strategy for Gender Equality, and whether the Government had designed a strategy to tackle opposition to the recognition of the marriage and adoption rights of same-sex couples and the provision of sex education in schools. Had a specific government body been made responsible for those issues? Were they addressed under the latest National Strategy for Gender Equality and had any lessons had been learned in that regard from the previous National Strategy for Gender Equality?

28. **Ms. Nadaraia** said that the Committee welcomed the adoption by the State party of the concept of affirmative action and the amending of the Anti-Discrimination Act to widen the scope of such action. However, the Act did not cover all the areas addressed by the Convention and only partially met the recommendations contained in previous concluding observations. Moreover, in certain cases, the affirmative action adopted did not meet the definition of temporary special measures, as it focused mainly on women's role as mothers rather than on the achievement of gender equality and was not temporary in nature. She asked whether the State party had a strategy to expand the Anti-Discrimination Act to cover all areas of the Convention and whether it had evaluated the impact of the Act on de facto gender equality. Information on the outcome of any relevant studies would be welcome.

29. What steps had been taken to increase women's representation in political parties? What temporary special measures, if any, would be introduced in that regard in the near future, and how did the State party intend to apply the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, on temporary special measures?

30. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities had been established in 1999. In 2012, following the adoption of the Competence Act, the Department had been granted cross-cutting competence in creating gender equality strategies and action plans. Since late 2011, the staff of the Department had increased significantly; there were currently 14 officials and a number of external contractors. The Department provided administrative support to the Committee for Gender Equality in preparing its programmes and documents. The Committee had expanded dramatically over the past few years and half its membership was drawn from NGOs.

31. Public debate on gender issues had seen an upsurge in support for conservative "gender ideology" over the past two to three years. Because it had no desire to curtail fundamental rights such as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, the Government had little scope to intervene in the debate and had been powerless to prevent either the referendum on same-sex relationships or the March for Life. However, the Department of Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities would continue to challenge those who disseminated misleading views about gender by engaging them in discussion at round-table events and media briefings.

32. The impact of anti-discrimination and gender equality laws and policies had been closely monitored since 2007. With support from the Institute for Labour and Family Research, the Committee for Gender Equality and civil society organizations, the Department of Gender Equality published an annual report on the state of play, each year concentrating on a different aspect. The 2015 report had focused on fulfilment of the Beijing Platform for Action, the 2014 report on work-life balance and the 2013 report on the impact of the economic crisis. The reports flagged up areas of deficiency as well as progress.

33. **Mr. Filčík** (Slovakia) said that the Anti-Discrimination Act was broader in scope than the parallel acts of its European Union counterparts, providing express protection against discrimination in all spheres of life. There were therefore no plans for further enhancement. Domestic legislation provided for the application of temporary special measures only in those areas expressly mentioned in the Act, but since the Convention had primacy over domestic law and contained no such restriction, temporary special measures could in practice be applied in any sphere.

34. **Ms. Pomeranzi**, noting that gender equality under the Convention was a far broader concept than gender equality under European Union policy, which tended to focus on social and economic equality, asked what consultative and intellectual support the Committee on Gender Equality might provide to broaden understanding of

the concept and engineer real change. She wondered why financial support for NGOs was being reined in at a time when their assistance was vital.

35. **Ms. Nadaraia** said that she wished to know more about the form that temporary special measures might take. She emphasized that, although the provisions of international human rights treaties prevailed over domestic law, their implementation was far more effective if they were transposed into domestic law.

36. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that the Government could do more to counter the conservative backlash without restricting freedom of speech and should, in her view, have made a clear statement to the effect that the agenda underlying the two recent citizens' initiatives, the referendum and the March for Life, was detrimental to women's status and position in society.

37. **Mr. Filčík** (Slovakia) said that the Anti-Discrimination Act contained a non-exhaustive list of the various forms that temporary special measures might take. Possibilities included measures to correct the disadvantage suffered by particular groups, reparatory measures, and training and awareness-raising initiatives. The Act specified that such measures could be implemented by public institutions, commercial companies, NGOs, schools or any other corporate body.

38. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the Government did not generally comment on citizens' initiatives. The referendum had been conducted in accordance with the Constitution and the Government could not take a position on what was a legitimate means of civil participation even if the underlying agenda ran counter to official State policy. However, whenever questions driven by gender ideology had been raised in the parliament, ministers had strongly reaffirmed the Government's commitment to existing State policy and gender equality. For example, when petitioned by a conservative member of parliament about the possibility of limiting access to abortion in view of the broad support the March for Life had garnered, the Prime Minister had clearly rejected the proposal, citing a Constitutional Court ruling that upheld women's constitutional right to access such services. She said that she could provide Committee members with numerous examples of such responses to attempts to undermine gender equality, should they wish. The Committee should also note that the Government had pressed ahead with the National Strategy for the Protection and Support of Human Rights and the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women despite the protests from certain sectors of society.

39. The country's history made the use of quotas to increase women's participation in political life a somewhat controversial issue and there were no such plans at present. The Government preferred to focus on introducing measures to promote work-life balance that created conditions in which women felt more able to engage in political activities and stand for office.

40. **Ms. Acar** said that countering so-called gender ideology was critical to effective implementation of article 5 of the Convention. For that reason, she would like information about the impact of the State party's efforts to combat gender stereotyping, including details of any comparative research that demonstrated how attitudes were changing as a result. Noting that only a third of Slovaks apparently acknowledged the existence of gender discrimination in their country, she suggested that public understanding of the concept of substantive equality might be in need of improvement, especially in view of the considerable resistance shown to ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

41. An update on the operation of the newly-launched 24-hour women's helpline and the Coordinating Methodological Centre on violence against women and domestic violence would be appreciated, as would details of the number of shelters, safe houses

and counselling services available for victims, the location and accessibility of such services, and the training in gender-based violence provided for members of the judiciary. She would like to know whether the State party took a gender-neutral approach to domestic violence or subscribed to the view which underpinned the Istanbul Convention, namely that domestic violence was a gendered crime, and whether training and awareness-raising initiatives emphasized that view, stressing the inherent link between gender inequality and violence against women.

42. **Ms. Leinarte** said that the information and figures on trafficking in human beings provided in the State party's report and its replies to the list of issues gave a mixed picture that did not provide a clear understanding of the current situation. She would like information about the budget and outcome of the National Programme on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings, which had come to an end in 2014; the content and budget of the new Programme for the Support and Protection of the Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings; the steps taken to ensure continuity of action; and the government bodies responsible for coordinating and implementing anti-trafficking efforts. She would also like to know more about the profile of victims and perpetrators, including their nationality, age and social background, and would welcome precise figures for the number of prosecutions. She was surprised that the State party had provided only limited statistical information, in view of the remit of the Information Centre for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Crime Prevention, and wondered what kind of data and analysis the Centre was producing.

43. She would also like to know whether any State-funded support was available for women victims of trafficking; what targeted measures were in place to protect Roma women and girls, who were particularly vulnerable to trafficking, forced labour and sexual exploitation; what measures had been adopted to reduce demand for prostitution; whether any research had been conducted to identify the root causes of prostitution; and whether any programmes were available for women and girls who wished to cease being prostitutes.

44. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that research conducted in 2012 as part of the International Social Survey Programme had revealed positive attitudinal trends. Just over one third of those questioned had stated that family life suffered when women worked, compared with over half 10 years previously, and only 10 per cent had cited the traditional male-breadwinner paradigm as the ideal model for family life. Among young people in particular, there was a clear shift towards shared parental responsibilities. The changes were happening slowly, and at an uneven pace — as elsewhere in Europe, rural areas were less liberal-minded — but the impact of measures to combat gender stereotypes was certainly evident.

45. The Government considered domestic violence to be a gender-specific issue that required a gender-sensitive approach. A proposal for a specific law on gender-based violence that was based on the Istanbul Convention and would support the general provisions of the Penal Code was under consideration.

46. **Ms. Rozborová** (Slovakia) said that State policy for the prevention and elimination of violence against women took a human rights-based approach and recognized that such violence impaired or nullified a wide range of fundamental rights and freedoms. In developing and implementing its policy, the Government had adhered to the Committee's general recommendation No. 19 on violence against women and its 2008 concluding observations. It had performed a thorough analysis of all relevant legislation prior to ratification of the Istanbul Convention and had identified a number of amendments, notably to the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, that should accompany the Convention's transposition into domestic law. For example, a second act of domestic violence committed by a person fined or otherwise penalized for a similar act within the previous year would be classified as an



offence under criminal law. The principle of minimal contact between victim and perpetrator would be applied during questioning and hearings, and perpetrators would be prohibited from entering shared dwellings or from approaching their victims for a period of 10 days.

47. A first draft of the bill on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and domestic violence had been submitted for public discussion in June 2015. Relevant stakeholders, including women's organizations, had been involved from the outset. The 2014-2019 National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women laid the foundation for providing institutional support to survivors. The Plan, which would be reviewed on an annual basis, set out clear objectives with associated indicators and time frames.

48. The 24-hour helpline for women victims of violence had been launched in March 2015. It received an average of 600 calls a month and anonymous statistics were collected to monitor its effectiveness. The Office of the General Prosecutor had also established a free helpline for reporting crimes. Counselling centres had noted that, since the launch of the two helplines, the number of women seeking assistance had doubled. The "16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence" campaign was conducted every year with the help of public resources and, in summer 2016, the Department of Gender Equality planned to run a campaign to raise awareness of violence against women and girls.

49. One of the key achievements of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family had been the creation of the Coordinating Methodological Centre on gender-based violence and domestic violence, which would provide training on gender equality and judicial stereotyping, for example, to law enforcement officers, members of the judiciary and health professionals. Training would take place in 2016 and would follow guidelines drawn up by the Council of Europe. The Centre was also working with the Prison and Court Guard Corps on rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence, as suggested in the Committee's general recommendation No. 19 on violence against women. The total budget for activities to combat violence against women and domestic violence in the period 2013-2015 was €12 million, of which €7 million had been provided by the State and by Norway Grants. Most of the funds were allocated to counselling centres and shelters for victims; there were plans to open an additional 15 centres and 7 shelters by the end of 2016. In 2014, two projects had been carried out as part of the Employment and Social Inclusion Programme to offer institutional support to victims and guarantee the availability of shelters in all self-governing regions.

50. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and the Family was working closely with the police to ensure that data was collected on all complaints of domestic violence, regardless of whether they resulted in criminal proceedings. In that connection, the Attorney General had recently announced that all complaints that had not led to criminal proceedings would be investigated further. The effectiveness of measures to collect data on violence against women was evaluated annually by the Department of Gender Equality. Specific research had been conducted on domestic violence and there were plans to carry out research on the prevalence of violence against women, on sexual violence and on the situation of children in shelters.

51. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the National Programme on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings had an annual State-funded budget of €310,000 and that NGOs could request funding for anti-trafficking initiatives from a range of State institutions, including the Government Council for Crime Prevention.

52. In 2013, eight persons had been prosecuted for human trafficking and, in 2014, 22 victims had received support under the Programme. Victims were typically

members of the Roma community from the Košice region. The youngest recorded victim had been 19 years old and the oldest, 48. The Information Centre for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Crime Prevention produced an annual report on the Programme that could be transmitted to the Committee if required. The Ministry of the Interior had set up a free national helpline to provide prevention information and to serve as an initial point of contact for potential victims. In 2014 there had been 1,720 callers, many of them young women seeking advice about job offers abroad. In the same year, five victims had been identified thanks to the helpline.

53. **Mr. Hero** (Slovakia) said that the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities had carried out an anti-trafficking project to improve the effectiveness of prevention and awareness-raising measures among marginalized Roma groups and had drawn up methodological guidelines for the identification of Roma victims.

54. **Ms. Pomeranzi** asked what steps the State party was taking in response to hate crimes committed by the police, politicians and the media against Roma and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women.

55. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** called on the State party to ensure that the planned Act on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was given that name, in line with the Istanbul Convention, and to avoid any reference to gender-based violence. She asked whether the 24-hour helpline for women victims of violence was staffed at all times.

56. **Ms. Leinarte** asked which government body was tasked with coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the National Programme on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings. She invited the delegation to present a profile of the typical prostitute in Slovakia.

57. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that 11 persons were employed to run the 24-hour helpline, which was staffed by at least two persons during the day and one at night. Despite being reserved for women, it did receive a small number of calls each month from men, all of whom were given appropriate guidance. While she was not in a position to provide a profile of the typical prostitute in Slovakia, such information could perhaps be obtained from NGOs working on the ground. The Ministry of the Interior was responsible for the implementation of the National Programme on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and had established the Information Centre for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Crime Prevention, in accordance with European Union Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims.

58. **Mr. Hero** (Slovakia) said that, since the beginning of 2015, the Government had been cooperating with experts from the Council of Europe to provide training in non-discrimination against the Roma community. Initial sessions had taken place in August for legal workers and in September for members of the police force.

#### *Articles 7 to 9*

59. **Ms. Haidar**, noting that there were no women members of the Cabinet, said that women's representation in the political sphere had been stagnant for over a decade. With that in mind, she wished to know what the Government was doing to determine the reasons for the lack of progress and whether it would consider offering incentives to political parties. Only one party had adopted an equality policy.

60. In reference to paragraphs 80 and 81 of the replies to the list of issues (CEDAW/C/SVK/Q/5-6/Add.1), she asked how the 2014-2019 National Strategy for Gender Equality would help increase the representation of women in political

decision-making positions; what temporary special measures would be introduced in accordance with the Anti-Discrimination Act and with article 4 of the Convention?

61. The delegation should describe the impact on political life of activities to ensure the availability of kindergartens and to facilitate women's return from maternity leave. It should also state the number of Roma women parliamentarians and outline efforts to enhance their participation. It was worrying that no woman had ever led a self-governing region and that, in terms of the number of women on corporate boards of directors, Slovakia lagged behind countries with a similar level of socioeconomic development. In order to address those shortcomings, it might prove useful to analyse the reasons for them.

62. She asked what roles and responsibilities women had in the judiciary, whether there were any Roma members of the judiciary, and, if not, what was being done to promote their participation. According to table 6 of the State party's report (CEDAW/C/SVK/5-6), only 11.7 per cent of senior posts in diplomatic missions were held by women. She wished to know why that was the case and whether any special measures were envisaged to rectify the situation. She would also appreciate further details on the exact nature of the senior posts occupied by women at headquarters and on the numbers of Roma women in the diplomatic service in Slovakia and abroad.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*