



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Fifty-third session

### Summary record of the 1077th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Friday, 5 October 2012, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Ms. Pimentel

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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)**

*Sixth periodic report of Equatorial Guinea (CEDAW/C/GNQ/6; CEDAW/C/GNQ/Q/6 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Equatorial Guinea took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea), introducing the sixth periodic report (CEDAW/C/GNQ/6), said that the principle of equality was enshrined in article 13 of the Constitution and that gender equality and the advancement of women were Government priorities in Equatorial Guinea. Various programmes and mechanisms had been established to improve the social and economic situation of women, and courses and awareness-raising activities had been arranged for all sectors to combat cultural attitudes and practices that discriminated against women. Under its development strategy entitled “Equatorial Guinea Horizon 2020”, the Government aimed to promote gender equity and the empowerment of women, improve the institutional framework for the promotion and protection of women and children’s rights, ensure free access to basic services for women and children and strengthen public and civil society mechanisms for defending the rights of women. The Government was also implementing various projects to improve the social, economic and cultural lives of women, with the support of United Nations agencies and a number of countries, including a programme to fund women’s agricultural groups, which aimed to increase the income of women in rural areas.
3. Important steps had thus been made towards ensuring gender equality; however, much still remained to be done. More progress could be expected when the draft personal and family code, the customary marriage bill and the bill on comprehensive protection to prevent, punish and eliminate violence against women had been enacted. The implementation of the new Constitution would almost certainly have a positive impact on gender equality since one of its articles obliged the Government to pass laws and establish mechanisms to ensure the adequate representation and participation of women in public office, including in decision-making positions.

*Articles 1 to 3*

4. **Ms. Šimonović** said that while the Committee welcomed the fact that the new Constitution specifically upheld the principle of equality and prohibited gender-based discrimination, it was concerned about the slow progress being made in the elimination of discriminatory legal provisions. She asked the delegation to explain the mechanism for bringing the country’s legislation into line with its international and constitutional obligations and to indicate when the necessary legislative changes, including the enactment of the three aforementioned bills, would take place. She also asked whether the Government had clearly identified all the laws and practices that needed to be amended and requested more information on the bill on violence against women and the associated criminal sanctions.

5. **Ms. Ameline** said that the Committee wished to know how the State party was using public policy to implement the Convention. She asked what priority the task was awarded in the Horizon 2020 development strategy, how much funding and international assistance it received and whether all public agencies were involved. She requested data on the budget allocated by the State to the advancement of women and asked whether it was adequate. She also asked for information on the arrangements made in parliament to defend women’s rights and in the judiciary to ensure access to justice for women. An indication as to

whether a Government body might be set up to monitor the elimination of all discriminatory provisions and ensure the timely passage of new legislation would be appreciated. The lack of statistical data was a matter of serious concern, since reliable statistics were essential for effective policymaking, and urgent measures must be taken to remedy the situation.

6. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that many of the laws in force in Equatorial Guinea had been established by the Spanish prior to independence and were not in keeping with the principles of the new Constitution. The Government now had the framework for creating autochthonous laws. As to customary law, men and women had the same rights and obligations in Equatorial Guinea, and that was an underlying principle of the customary marriage bill. The Government was committed to moving forward, and more funding had been allocated to women's affairs.

7. **Ms. Epam Biribé** (Equatorial Guinea) said that the spending budget of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women for 2012 was over US\$ 3 billion and the investment budget was US\$ 16 billion. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinated the international development assistance allocated to its projects. The funding received was used to support a number of programmes and activities, which were all planned on the basis of the Convention. The latter was also taken into account in parliament.

8. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that a multisectoral commission comprising representatives of all social affairs ministries had been set up in the Department of Social Affairs and Human Rights as a hub for coordinating social action in Equatorial Guinea.

9. **Ms. Ameline** said that the objectives and priorities of the State party were unclear and the Committee would like to know how the Government intended to organize its activities. Was it still at the general planning stage, or was it moving towards decentralizing its efforts and adopting a more grass-roots approach? Information on the organization of the justice system and the training of the judiciary in women's rights would be appreciated. She also requested information on how spending decisions regarding the official development assistance received from other countries were reached.

10. **Ms. Patten** asked whether an audit had been conducted to identify the gaps in the law that needed to be filled to promote gender equity. In the absence of a specific time frame for legal reform, it was difficult to assess the progress made. Many bills that had been in the pipeline at the time of the consideration of State party's previous reports (CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3 and 4-5) had still not moved forward. She would like the delegation to provide information on the implementation of any relevant laws that had been enacted. She also asked how judges were appointed and about the measures taken to ensure that women had access to justice and legal assistance.

11. **Ms. Schulz** asked whether there were any mechanisms for addressing the inconsistencies between customary law and statutory law. If the application of customary law resulted in discrimination, was it possible to take the matter to court and obtain a decision that would eliminate that discrimination?

12. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that customary law was only applicable to marriage. It had no effect in any other area. With regard to the training of the judiciary, lawyers from the country's universities had to undergo three years of legal training in the Institute of Legal Practice to become judges. Judges at all levels of the system were appointed by the Ministry of Justice. The President of the Republic only endorsed appointments, he did not make them. As to the time frame for the required legal reforms, according to the new Constitution, a completely new institutional framework had to be put in place. It was therefore difficult to indicate timelines and priorities at that moment;

nevertheless, the Government was committed to establishing a legal framework that was in accordance with the international treaties that Equatorial Guinea had ratified.

13. **Ms. Mikو Mikue** (Equatorial Guinea) said that the Government was making an effort to gather data. A study of the socioeconomic situation of women had been conducted in 2011. The results, which would be used to identify gaps and devise mechanisms and strategies for filling them, should be available for inclusion in the next periodic report. A demographic and health survey had also been carried out, as well as a survey of violence against women. The preliminary results of both those studies should be available by the end of 2012. A study of school attendance rates among girls was under way.

#### *Articles 4 to 6*

14. **Ms. Pires** said that the Committee wished to know what specific measures the State party envisaged adopting to increase equality, when it intended to adopt them and which institution would be responsible for overseeing the process. The Committee had recommended that Equatorial Guinea should take temporary special measures to encourage parents to send their girls to school and to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions. However, it seemed that no such measures had been implemented. It would be particularly appropriate for the Government to take temporary special measures to reverse the reported decline in the representation of women in public office. She wished to know which of the measures taken in the area of education were permanent and which were temporary, and enquired whether temporary special measures featured in the National Multisectoral Action Plan for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equity (2005–2015) were a means of ensuring the de facto equality of women.

15. **Ms. Patten** said that gender stereotyping impeded not only de jure and de facto equality but also the empowerment of women. In Equatorial Guinea, women needed their husband's authorization for almost anything, from travelling to opening a bank account. Negative stereotypes translated into policies that limited people's opportunities and into practices, such as forced marriages, gender pay gaps, glass ceilings and domestic violence, which harmed women. She wished to know to what extent the Government had identified the negative stereotypes so that it could address them across the board. She requested details about the efforts and resources allocated to combating negative stereotypes in the media, to revising school curricula at all levels for the same purpose and to encouraging girls and women to enter traditionally male-dominated fields.

16. **Ms. Murillo de la Vega** said that the Committee had noted that the State party had managed to enact the new laws required to allow contracts to be signed with foreign oil companies, such as the Hydrocarbons Act, but not those required to address violence against women. She wished to know why no measures had been taken to control the prostitution that had flourished as a result of the development of the hydrocarbon sector or to support sex workers. She requested specific data on the number of men who had been prosecuted and punished for operating illegal prostitution networks, for sexual abuse and for violence against women. She asked what action was being taken to protect adolescent girls from unwanted pregnancies, which, by definition, were the product of rape and forced girls to drop out of school. The Government had had plans and policies in place since 2002, as well as a large budget, but where were the results?

17. **Ms. Gabr** said that since the State party had not fulfilled the legislative and administrative commitments assumed upon ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Palermo Protocol), information about any plans to address the lack of anti-trafficking and anti-prostitution legislation and the absence of relevant studies, statistics and monitoring mechanisms was urgently required because the oil boom would inevitably increase the prevalence of

trafficking and prostitution. She would also like to know how members of the judiciary were trained to deal with the phenomena, what the Government was doing to raise awareness and whether shelters and support were available for victims. For example, were physical and psychological rehabilitation services available and, if so, was civil society involved in their provision? Lastly, she asked how the Government was addressing the root causes, which included poverty, inadequate law enforcement and impunity.

18. **Ms. Murillo de la Vega** said that the persistent deficiencies affecting access to justice in the State party appeared to be attributable not to a technocratic deficit but to a lack of political will. Eradicating violence and guaranteeing the availability of effective avenues of redress should be top priorities, and the Government should have a concrete timeline for the reforms required.

19. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that female participation in all branches of Government was gradually increasing. At present, women accounted for 11.4 per cent in the executive branch and 15 per cent in the legislative branch. There were several female ministers, secretaries of state, judges and ambassadors; moreover, Equatorial Guinea was represented by women on two international bodies – the United Nations Children’s Fund and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC).

20. Although the Government position was that the effects of poverty were the same for women and men, specific measures and programmes for women were in place. For example, under agreements with bilateral partners including China and Dubai, there was a sizeable support programme for women working in small-scale agriculture and other micro-businesses that provided flexible, interest-free credit.

21. Stereotyping was not an issue in Equatorial Guinea, and it was not true that women needed their husband’s permission to open a bank account. Both State and private sector organizations made payments directly to the beneficiary and did not place women’s entitlements in their husband’s accounts.

22. Prostitution existed but was confined to private places. For that reason, the adoption of anti-prostitution legislation was not a priority. Legislation combating gender-based violence was also not a priority as there had been no cases of women killed by their husband in the past two years.

23. The Hydrocarbons Act had been passed faster than other laws because the interests involved were not primarily social ones. Where concerns of the latter kind predominated, the promulgation of new laws was a slow process as conducting research and building consensus took time. Bills had to be considered by a multisectoral committee before being forwarded to other decision-making bodies and the interministerial committee; moreover, a second reading was often required. The fact that many of the country’s laws dated from colonial times and did not reflect the current context added to the legislative difficulties.

24. Most of the more than 30 NGOs registered in Equatorial Guinea were actively cooperating with the Government, and the Director General of Human Rights had already met with NGOs to address specific issues on four occasions that year. Difficulties had occasionally arisen at the financial level, specifically when NGOs sought funding for work that was already being done by the Government.

25. **Mr. Siale Bileka** (Equatorial Guinea), providing a specific example, said that one NGO had requested funding for a plan to study and implement recommendations issued in the universal periodic review that were already being reviewed by the Government. To prevent duplication of effort, the Government preferred NGOs to become involved at a later stage of the process.

26. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that there was no trafficking in Equatorial Guinea although it was geographically very vulnerable to the phenomenon,

especially in Malabo and the surrounding island region. It was impossible to control the thousands of people that might sometimes enter Malabo in the course of just one day and the authorities were in a difficult position. If they attempted to investigate or expel immigrants who arrived with children who might not be family members, they could be accused of failing to respect family ties, if not of worse human rights abuses such as xenophobia.

27. However, with support from the United States of America, the Government had recently held a conference at which it had examined the specific situations that influenced trafficking; it was also conducting a review of immigration law. Although from afar Equatorial Guinea might be perceived as an unlikely place in which one might wish to settle, the reality was that the many foreigners the economic boom had brought to the country frequently did not wish to leave when their contracts expired. That situation had to be regulated and the Government was working with its bilateral partners to find solutions that were not prejudicial to those who wished to remain, while at the same time attempting to control illegal immigration.

28. Measures taken to reduce early pregnancies and help young girls to continue their education if they did fall pregnant had included the establishment of shelters in Bata and Malabo offering re-education and rehabilitation. There was also a newly established vocational education centre in Malabo that offered training in fields such as catering and plumbing for men and women alike. Since much of the education budget had in the past been used to establish higher education facilities, a shortage of primary skills had developed that the Government was now working to address.

29. **Ms. Miko Mikue** (Equatorial Guinea) said that information, awareness-raising and training activities encompassing women's rights, gender issues and domestic violence were organized on a regular basis for all branches of Government as well as for uniformed officials in the police and armed forces. A guide to justice mechanisms had recently been published and had been distributed throughout the country, ensuring that all segments of the population had access to the information required.

30. Establishing services for victims of violence was difficult because the problem was not so visible. Following the Committee's consideration of the previous periodic report, her Ministry had endeavoured to conduct research with prostitutes but had failed to gain sufficient input despite using non-conventional approaches and methodologies. In addition, there had been very few cases of domestic violence. Those that were reported were referred to the judiciary and the authorities did everything possible to ensure appropriate redress. A bill that covered all aspects of victim support was currently pending parliamentary approval.

31. **Ms. Jahan** asked how the authorities could be certain that there was no trafficking in Equatorial Guinea unless it had a foolproof mechanism for distinguishing between victims of trafficking and illegal migrants. Since the State party's replies to the list of issues (CEDAW/C/GNQ/Q/6/Add.1) indicated that no research had been carried out to determine the scale, causes and consequences of trafficking, the existence of such a mechanism appeared unlikely, and she would appreciate an explanation of the rationale for that statement. She also enquired whether domestic legislation contained a definition of trafficking that was in line with the Palermo Protocol and sought clarification regarding the existence of prostitution. There was an undeniable link between oil booms and sex tourism and the replies to the list of issues mentioned measures to prevent and reduce demand for prostitution: was that not an express acknowledgement of the problem?

32. **Ms. Pires** asked when the new measures introduced under article 13 of the Constitution would be implemented, which body would be responsible for them and which of the measures were temporary and which were permanent. Noting that the multiple forms

of discrimination that women faced were acknowledged in the State party's report in the references to higher levels of poverty among rural women, she asked whether the State party had taken the content of the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 into consideration when devising the measures in question.

33. **Ms. Gabr** said that without a legislative framework which adequately defined the offence, the perpetrators and the victims, it was impossible to identify cases of trafficking, conduct relevant research and produce statistics. For that reason, legislation should be enacted as a matter of urgency. Research, a dedicated monitoring mechanism and action to identify and address the root causes were also needed. Trafficking was a cross-border phenomenon that all countries faced and must be prepared to combat.

34. **Ms. Murillo de la Vega** said that in Spain several women from Equatorial Guinea had died at the hands of their partners in the last year and she found it surprising that there had been no equivalent cases in their homeland. She would also like to know why the State party's report contained no data on domestic violence, as a study of discrimination against women conducted in 2006 must surely have covered the issue of abuse. She was also concerned about the lack of separate prison facilities for women.

35. **Ms. Šimonović**, noting that NGOs and networks had apparently participated in the preparation of the report, asked what the consultations had entailed and why no national NGOs were present at the meeting. She would also like information about any national NGOs that provided services to victims of violence against women.

36. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea), providing clarification on a number of points, said that there were only a small number of women in prison in Equatorial Guinea. Data of the kind sought by Ms. Murillo de la Vega existed but he did not have them to hand; however, the report contained copious statistics and it was unfair to suggest that data was withheld. The State party did have a law on trafficking and illegal immigration, contrary to Ms. Gabr's understanding, and he acknowledged that it could be a destination country for trafficking even though it was not an active participant. In asserting that prostitution did not exist, he was simply referring to the lack of visibility surrounding the problem and the fact that prostitutes were not seen in public places.

37. Although there was no specific law on gender-based violence, cases could be handled under civil and criminal law, a bill was currently before parliament and the Government kept statistics on physical, sexual and psychological abuse. However, the claim that gender-based violence was an isolated phenomenon was legitimate as there was perhaps one death of a woman as a result of violence every five years.

38. With regard to Ms. Pires' question regarding temporary special measures, he referred the Committee to the State party's replies to question 4 of the list of issues. With regard to cooperation with NGOs and their absence at the meeting, he had not been aware that an NGO presence was required, but he would endeavour to rectify that omission next time. As a general rule, the Government and NGOs worked hand in hand and met regularly.

39. **The Chairperson** said that an NGO presence was important to the spirit of the reporting process but was not an obligation. The purpose of the Committee's questions was to ascertain the Government's approach to NGO cooperation and consultation.

40. **Ms. Miko Mikue** (Equatorial Guinea) said that more than 15 NGOs had attended a meeting prior to the report's publication and had had the opportunity to contribute to its drafting.

41. **Ms. Šimonović** said that the Committee's position on the role of NGOs was very clear and that it was good practice not only to consult them but also to encourage them to attend meetings and present their views rather than simply submitting them in written form.

Was the delegation aware of any obstacles that might have prevented national NGOs from attending?

*Articles 7 to 9*

42. **Ms. Bareiro-Bobadilla** asked for additional information on the State party's implementation of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention. The information provided in the periodic report and written replies was inadequate and she would therefore welcome data on women who held political office and their membership of political parties. Highlighting the decline in women's political participation, which the delegation had stated reflected the popular will, she said it was important to change attitudes towards women and to consider the use of temporary special measures for that purpose.

43. She asked how judges were appointed and how data was collected on women's progress in public life. In particular, she noted that data on women's representation in decision-making positions had been described by the State party as being indicative of gradual progress, when in fact such data revealed abrupt changes in women's representation. More information should be provided on women in NGOs, business associations and trade unions, as well as those organizations' cooperation with Government ministries. Finally, she asked when Equatorial Guinea was likely to have a female President.

44. **Ms. Schulz** asked whether a foreigner of either sex who married a national of Equatorial Guinea was thereby able to acquire nationality of Equatorial Guinea. When nationality was acquired through marriage and long-term residence in the State party, did any additional requirements have to be met, beyond the 10-year residency period? Information would also be appreciated on whether nationality of Equatorial Guinea acquired through marriage was lost following divorce, and whether children with one parent from Equatorial Guinea and one parent from another country were able to acquire nationality of Equatorial Guinea.

45. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that the situation regarding the transfer of nationality had improved, since foreign nationals marrying women from Equatorial Guinea could now choose to retain their original nationality. Children acquired nationality at the discretion of their parents and the nationality of a child therefore depended on the parents' wishes.

46. Women were entitled to stand for election and to vote in elections, and the ruling party in Equatorial Guinea was led by a woman. In addition, the two most recent mayors of the capital, Malabo, had been women and there were many women in similar positions of responsibility throughout the country. He hoped to see a woman elected as President of Equatorial Guinea in the near future.

47. Judges were trained at the designated legal institute and were nominated by the Council of the Judiciary – an apolitical body composed of members of the Constitutional Court. The President ratified the appointment of judges.

48. He noted the importance of NGOs and said that the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women in particular cooperated with NGOs. There were not currently any trade unions in Equatorial Guinea.

49. **Ms. Epam Biribé** (Equatorial Guinea) said that awareness-raising campaigns had been launched throughout the country to encourage women to play an active role in the elections scheduled for late 2012 and to persuade more women to stand for office. The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women had run campaigns to boost women's confidence about participating in public life and had worked closely with NGOs to change attitudes towards women in leadership. One example of Government cooperation

with NGOs was the submission by NGOs of reports on women victims of violence, which the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women cross-checked against data provided by hospitals.

50. **Ms. Schulz** said that she wished to know how the State party intended to increase women's political participation, given that there was a wide variety of ways of encouraging women to participate, including through the use of temporary special measures.

51. **Ms. Bareiro-Bobadilla** said that when considering measures to encourage women to assume positions of responsibility and stand for office, it was useful to have disaggregated figures for the number of voters in the country.

52. **Ms. Jahan**, noting that the State party's written replies referred only to women who acquired the nationality of their foreign husbands, asked what the situation was concerning nationals of Equatorial Guinea who married foreign women. She asked whether, in legal terms, a woman who was a national of Equatorial Guinea was able to transfer her nationality to her children if she married a foreign man.

53. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that the Bantu people had traditionally lived in a patriarchal society, where women were not always respected when they expressed their views; something that the Government was working to change. For the most part, women did not want to stand for election, although the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Advancement of Women was encouraging women to participate.

54. The nationality of a child was decided at the discretion of the parents, since both parents were required to agree to the child acquiring the desired nationality. Once the parents were in agreement, the legal situation could be considered. The tradition in Equatorial Guinea was for children to acquire the nationality of their father, regardless of whether he was a national of Equatorial Guinea.

55. **Ms. Jahan** enquired whether a foreign man who married a national of Equatorial Guinea was able to acquire the nationality of Equatorial Guinea. She further enquired whether a woman with nationality of Equatorial Guinea who had a foreign husband was able to transfer her nationality to her children.

56. **Ms. Patten** said that the law on nationality did not provide for the same rights for men and women, which might be a vestige of colonial laws that should be removed.

57. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that one of the principles of acquiring nationality was the will to transfer that nationality, which had not been the case under the former law that obliged persons who married a national of Equatorial Guinea to renounce their original nationality in order to gain nationality of Equatorial Guinea. Following 10 years of residence in Equatorial Guinea, a foreign national married to a national of Equatorial Guinea was not obliged to acquire the nationality of Equatorial Guinea, but could choose to do so.

58. **Ms. Schulz** asked how many agreements on dual nationality the State party had concluded with other States, given that Equatorial Guinea did not recognize dual nationality.

59. **Mr. Nsue Mokuy** (Equatorial Guinea) said that there were currently no agreements on dual nationality in force and that Equatorial Guinea had no plans to introduce any. The Government's position was that persons should not be able to pick and choose their nationality according to what suited them best at a given moment. Any person who became a national of Equatorial Guinea enjoyed the same rights as any other citizen.

*Articles 10 to 14*

60. **Ms. Bailey**, noting that the data in the report was mostly taken from the 2001 census and was out of date, enquired about the measures in place allowing the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports to collect annual data on a wide range of indicators, such as school attendance and drop-out rates. Furthermore, she asked whether schools were required to provide data to the Ministry on an annual basis.

61. Data provided in the periodic report indicated that the enrolment rate for girls dropped significantly when children moved from primary to secondary school, which was a matter of grave concern. She therefore asked whether there were enough school places to accommodate all children in the relevant age cohorts, and requested figures for the net and gross school enrolment rates.

62. She requested more information on measures to reduce the rate of early marriage and to change parental attitudes to girls' education. Information on the implementation and impact of measures to reduce drop-out rates would be appreciated. She wished to know the status of the forthcoming study on girls' school attendance referred to in paragraph 59 of the State party's report. It was unclear whether the national strategy for literacy had been implemented and whether adolescent girls were encouraged to participate in it.

63. Noting that the report referred to two centres for students who were beyond school age, such as girls who had left school due to early pregnancy, she asked whether girls were allowed to return to mainstream schooling following pregnancy. She also asked whether there was any similar service for girls in areas far from the two existing centres, and whether the cost of attending the centres, which were private, presented an obstacle to some girls who wished to return to education.

64. **Ms. Patten** said it was regrettable that little information was available on women's participation in the labour market and asked to what extent the Government was promoting gender mainstreaming in all its programmes. She requested information on activities to improve women's participation in the public sector and the labour market, and on legislation in all areas relating to employment, including social security and sexual harassment.

65. She asked whether there were plans for the formation of trade unions and whether collective bargaining was recognized by the State as a right. Since there were no data available on women's participation in the private sector, she wished to know what obstacles prevented the collection of that data and how good practices were encouraged and monitored in the private sector. Information would be appreciated on efforts to close the gender pay gap, how the principle of equal pay for work of equal value was implemented, and how support was offered to women entrepreneurs and women working in the informal sector.

66. **Ms. Arocha Domínguez**, welcoming efforts to improve access to primary health care, said that it was unclear whether the State party had special measures to address women's health issues, particularly sexual and reproductive health and cancers that were specific to women. The data in the report showed that, although there was a relatively high ratio of medical professionals per person in Equatorial Guinea, the ratio of midwives per woman was far below the standards established by the World Health Organization; she asked the delegation to explain the reasons for that discrepancy. She also asked what progress had been made in increasing the number of births attended by medical professionals.

67. She requested the State party to provide recent data on maternal mortality, disaggregated by the cause of death, as well as data on the rate of unsafe abortions. Information on the health impact of unsafe abortions and early pregnancies would also be useful. Finally, she asked whether children who were born outside of marriage, had a disability or were of ethnic minority origin suffered discrimination in terms of health care.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*