



**Convention on the
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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1347th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 17 September 2008, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. LEE

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

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES (continued)

Second periodic report of Djibouti (CRC/C/DJI/2; CRC/C/DJI/Q/2 and Add.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Djibouti took places at the Committee table.

2. Ms. BOULHAN HOUSSEIN (Djibouti), introducing the second periodic report of Djibouti (CRC/C/DJI/2), said that in January 2002 the Family Code had been adopted and a personal status court had been established. That had helped to unify the various types of law - customary, Islamic and modern - applicable in the country and had also enabled Djibouti to bring its national legislation into line with international treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Other pertinent laws, including the Labour Code, the Nationality Code and laws on education and health, had been amended. Djibouti had signed the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, which had strengthened the legal arsenal for preventing all forms of female genital mutilation. The Government had formulated its plans and policies in the areas of health, education, youth, water and sanitation, agriculture and livestock with a view to improving children's enjoyment of their rights. At the same time, it had increased budget allocations for social services, from 38 per cent in 1999 to 48 per cent in 2006. The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Family Welfare and Social Affairs played a leading role in coordinating activities and policies relating to the rights of the child.

3. Various means had been used to disseminate the provisions of the Convention, and the text of the Convention had been translated into the national languages and had been broadly disseminated. However, implementation of the Convention had been hampered by the need to strengthen the coordination mechanism, and to improve the data collection and distribution systems; greater attention must be paid to the Committee's observations and recommendations, which should be duly reflected in sectoral action plans.

4. The Government had taken steps to ensure equality and non-discrimination in the provision of basic social services. It had launched a new national programme for the care of orphans and vulnerable children that took account of children's opinions and made the best interests of the child the guiding principle in all programmes designed for children. The Government had also carried out awareness-raising campaigns in favour of street children. However, much remained to be done to improve the situation of street children and children with special needs.

5. Nearly 90 per cent of Djibouti's children were registered at birth, and various steps were being taken to increase birth registration. For example, 2,640 birth certificates had been issued to children pursuant to special court orders. A bill aimed at decentralizing civil registration services and extending the period during which births could be declared was currently under consideration, and the Government intended to carry out a campaign to ensure that all declared births were followed up with the issuance of birth certificates.

6. The mortality rate for children under 5 had fallen from 129 per 1,000 live births in 2002, to 94 in 2006. The integrated management of childhood illnesses and vaccination coverage had improved, as had access to health infrastructures and clean water. Acute malnutrition had also fallen, although the recent rise in food prices was threatening the gains made in that area. A study carried out in 2007 had found that 55 per cent of 7-year-old girls enrolled in school had not undergone female genital mutilation. As a result of the Government's proactive policy and technical and financial support from its partners, the parent-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission rate had stabilized at about 2.3 per cent in 2007.

7. The enrolment rate for primary education had risen from 39 per cent in 1999 to 72 per cent in 2007. Significant investments had been made to build classrooms, improve the quality of education and access to teaching materials, train teachers and reform the student evaluation system. State budget allocations for education had risen from 16 per cent in 2000 to 24.8 per cent in 2006. Despite those achievements, certain problems remained. Keeping children in school and modernizing technical and vocational training would be the main themes of the plan of action for education currently being drawn up for 2008-2010. The national youth policy focused on the need to strengthen community development centres and sports facilities in the regions, and the establishment of the National Youth Council would make it easier to take children's views into consideration.

8. Efforts had been made to improve the collection of data on vulnerable children, including orphans, street children, children in conflict with the law, and children with disabilities; a five-year plan of action had been drawn up to assist such children. The Government had established two funds, each equivalent to US\$ 560,000, one for orphans and vulnerable children, and the other to support school cafeterias in rural areas. Djibouti had ratified International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and had adopted a law to combat trafficking in persons. However, there was still a need to improve coordination of special measures to protect children.

9. Since the submission of the second periodic report, the Government had launched a national initiative for social development and had established the State Secretariat for Solidarity and the National Human Rights Commission. A new refugee centre had been set up at Loyada on the border with Somalia; certain responsibilities had been decentralized to local governments; and the Government had begun the ratification process for the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and for the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. A joint committee had been established to combat the use of tobacco, khat and chicha.

10. Mr. KOTRANE (Country Rapporteur) said that, in addition to the Family Code, Djibouti had adopted a number of other legislative acts, including the Labour Code, a law on free and compulsory education to the age of 16, a law on measures to protect people living with HIV/AIDS and a law to combat trafficking in persons. It had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and it was one of the few countries in the region that had ratified without reservations the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Djibouti had also ratified six ILO conventions, including ILO Convention No. 183 concerning the Revision of the Maternity Protection Convention (Revised). The delegation should specify what steps the State party had

taken to ratify the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and other international instruments, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

11. In its list of issues (CRC/C/DJI/Q/2), the Committee had raised the question of Djibouti's general declaration, according to which the State party did not consider itself bound by any provisions or articles of the Convention that were incompatible with its religion and its traditional values. In its replies, the Government had informed the Committee that it not only maintained its declaration but also wished to introduce a new reservation pertaining to articles 14 and 21, which it considered to be at variance with sharia law and with the Constitution. That position was unacceptable, since States parties could not introduce new reservations; it also went against the general trend whereby States of the region were withdrawing existing reservations. In any case, the wording of article 21 applied only to States that recognized and/or permitted the system of adoption, and Djibouti was not such a State; there was therefore no need to make a reservation. He urged the Government to reconsider its position and withdraw its general declaration.

12. In its replies to the list of issues, the Government had stated that the Convention could not be invoked directly before the courts. The delegation should explain what the position of the courts would be in the event of a conflict between the Convention and domestic legislation. He wished to know whether the Convention took priority over Djibouti's domestic legislation.

13. Although efforts had been made to ensure that civil law took precedence over Islamic law and customary law, certain traditional practices had continued. The delegation should explain what was being done to ensure that the provisions of civil law were followed in practice. Lastly, he wished to know what steps the State party had taken to combat discrimination, particularly discrimination against children born out of wedlock and children who did not know who their parents were. He wondered whether such children were able to assert their rights, in particular the right to inheritance.

14. Mr. PURAS (Alternate Country Rapporteur) said that, although social expenditure on behalf of children had increased since the State party had submitted its initial report, it was still not sufficient, particularly in the health sector. Under article 4 of the Convention, States parties were required to undertake measures to the maximum extent of their available resources. Even limited resources could be used effectively if invested wisely and transparently and administered in cooperation with civil society. He wondered what lessons had been learned from the recent years of development in the health and education sectors and what steps were planned to increase the effectiveness of budget allocations both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

15. Notwithstanding surveys conducted in many fields, Djibouti's data collection systems remained weak. The delay in organizing the national census presented an obstacle to planning, which translated into gaps in budget expenditure. He wondered what was causing that delay.

16. Although Djibouti's population was mainly urban, one third still lived in rural areas, and there were imbalances between the two sectors. He wondered how budget allocations were used to redress those imbalances.

17. The delegation should explain how the Solidarity Fund for AIDS Orphans worked, how effective it was and how transparency was maintained.

18. He wished to know how young people, whether individually or through associations, exercised their right to be heard and their right to freedom of expression in everyday life. He wondered whether they were able to obtain the information they needed to gain access to services or to ensure their right to privacy and independent decision-making.

19. Mr. PARFITT asked when the special subcommission on children's rights referred to in the Government's written replies (CRC/C/DJI/Q/2/Add.1) would be established, how large a staff it would have and whether it would have sufficient funding to ensure its viability. He wished to know whether it would be child-friendly and accept complaints from children, and whether it would be easily accessible at the regional and local levels.

20. He noted that the National Human Rights Commission had been established by administrative decree, as distinct from an act of Parliament, and he wondered whether the Government was planning to convert that administrative decree into legislation.

21. The Committee had no information on the Office of the Ombudsman. It was not clear whether the Office monitored implementation of the Convention or accepted complaints from or on behalf of children. He wondered what its relationship was with the National Human Rights Commission.

22. He welcomed the establishment by the Ministry of Justice, in response to the Committee's recommendation, of a committee to coordinate government bodies involved in children's rights. He wished to know whether that committee had been constituted and, if so, whether it had sufficient human and financial resources to operate properly. He commended the Government's work with civil society in the field of children's rights, and asked whether civil society was involved in policy coordination.

23. Ms. KHATTAB said that Djibouti's declaration that it would not consider itself bound by any provisions of the Convention that were incompatible with its religion raised very important issues, particularly in the light of the current tendency to manipulate religion in order to allow practices such as female genital mutilation. The Convention, which had been ratified by nearly all countries, was based on the best interests of the child. The idea that those interests could conflict with religion was not frequently encountered among States parties. Her own country, Egypt, which was also a Muslim country, had withdrawn the reservations it had made in similar vein, and she encouraged Djibouti to do likewise.

24. With regard to Djibouti's reservations under article 14, she said that children's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion was a universal right under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article 14 paragraph 2, of the Convention required States parties to respect the rights and duties of parents and legal guardians to provide direction to the child in the exercise of that right "in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child", and she urged the State party to consider article 14 in the context of that parental guidance.

25. She invited the State party to reconsider its position on article 21, which concerned adoption. Her own country had originally made a reservation to that article, fearing that it was contrary to Islamic law. The religious authorities had subsequently concluded that the article was not at variance with Islamic law, and Egypt had withdrawn its reservation.

26. Mr. POLLAR wished to know how aid was received in Djibouti and what percentage went to children. He noted that Dubai Cares was carrying out a large project in the country and he wondered how that project benefited Djibouti's children.

27. He asked how the State party dealt with the issue of child labour, since Djibouti did not appear to be associated with the International Labour Organization's International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

28. On the question of training and dissemination, he wondered whether the Committee's concluding observations on Djibouti's initial report had been translated and published. He requested additional information about training in the provisions of the Convention for specialists in various fields.

29. With regard to the right to a name and a nationality, he asked what the Government's position was on the removal of all discrimination against child asylum-seekers and child refugees. It was necessary to guarantee universal access to birth registration outside refugee camps as well as the issuance of formal birth certificates, and ensure that such children could obtain auxiliary birth certificates if they were born outside Djibouti. He also wondered whether the State party had acceded to the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.

30. Ms. SMITH said that she did not have a clear picture of the everyday life of the average child in Djibouti. She asked whether they had an opportunity to listen to the radio, watch television, visit libraries or use the telephone. She wished to know whether cities provided facilities, such as sports fields and playgrounds, to enable children to exercise their right to rest, leisure and recreational and cultural activities. The delegation should indicate to what extent children were able to exercise their right of access to information in the mass media.

31. Mr. FILALI said that the composition of the National Human Rights Commission had a direct impact on its independence. He wished to know how many members were from ministries or NGOs, and how many members were women. He also wished to know how the Commission was to be funded. He wondered whether the subcommission on children's rights would be sufficiently visible, and whether it would have the authority to conduct its own surveys and projects. There was a risk that children's rights would simply be subsumed under human rights in general.

32. He wished to know what specific impact the State Secretariat for Solidarity could have on children's daily life.

33. On the question of children's participation and their right to be heard, he wished to know what mechanisms had been put in place to allow children to express their views in institutions,

such as schools or courts of law. It was difficult to conceive of children's involvement in decision-making within families since the prevailing culture did not encourage such participation even when children had reached a certain level of maturity.

34. Mr. CITARELLA, referring to the State party's declaration that Djibouti would not consider itself bound by provisions incompatible with its traditional values, he asked whether customary practice, particularly in rural areas, permitted different ages of marriage for boys and girls and allowed girls to be forced to marry without being able to express their views.

35. Ms. AIDOO encouraged Djibouti to consider accelerating ratification of the two Optional Protocols to the Convention. Since Djibouti was situated in the Horn of Africa, which was a war zone, the Committee was concerned that children from Djibouti might become involved in armed conflict. Owing to its geographical location, Djibouti could become a source or destination for children covered by the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. She also wondered what was preventing Djibouti from ratifying the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, since Djibouti had already ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

36. The CHAIRPERSON said that, in many countries, civil society took responsibility for implementing programmes for children. She asked the delegation to describe how the Government worked to make civil society a vibrant force.

37. The Committee had received conflicting information on corporal punishment in the State party. It was not clear whether corporal punishment was still permitted in the penal and justice systems or in childcare.

38. The "reservation" that the Government had introduced in its replies to the list of issues could not properly be considered a reservation since Djibouti had not made such a reservation when it had signed the Convention. There was therefore no need for Djibouti to withdraw it.

39. Mr. KOTRANE asked whether there was a global body to coordinate all policies on children and why there was no global action plan on children's rights. He requested more information on the Children's Parliament, which, according to his information, did not represent all children equally.

40. Mr. HERSI (Djibouti) said that the instruments of ratification for the two Optional Protocols and for the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child had been submitted to Parliament on 17 August 2008, the Secretary-General of the United Nations should receive those instruments by the end of October 2008. With regard to the direct applicability of the Convention in the national legal system, he said that article 37 of Djibouti's Constitution provided that a convention or protocol duly ratified by Djibouti took precedence over domestic law and could therefore be invoked directly in a court of law.

41. Mr. FILALI asked how, in the absence of any implementing legislation, the Convention was directly applicable in Djibouti. The delegation should indicate whether there had been any cases in which the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, or any other human rights convention, had been directly invoked in a court.

42. Mr. HERSI (Djibouti) said that, if a person invoked a provision of an international human rights convention the instrument of ratification for which had been published in the *Official Gazette*, the judge had to take that provision into account.

43. Sanctions for corporal punishment were provided under articles 324 to 327 of the Criminal Code; the sanctions were severe when the punishment was inflicted on a child by his or her parent or guardian. To date, no cases of corporal punishment inflicted on a child by his or her parent or guardian had been brought before a court. However, cases of violence against children were frequently brought before the courts; in such cases, the fact that the victim was a child was considered to be an aggravating circumstance.

44. The Government had decided to clarify the declaration that it had initially made on signing the Convention and to make a reservation to specific articles that were difficult for Djibouti to accept. The Minister for Foreign Affairs had sent an official letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, informing him that Djibouti wished to withdraw its initial declaration, but that it did not consider itself bound by the provisions of articles 14 and 21. He had, however, taken note of the concern that had been expressed by members of the Committee.

45. Mr. KOTRANE said that international law provided that reservations could be made only at the time of ratification of a convention. He hoped that the Government would reconsider its position.

46. Ms. BOULHAND HOUSSEIN (Djibouti) said that she had taken note of the comments made by members of the Committee with regard to Djibouti's reservation to the Convention. The Government would give further consideration to the matter.

47. Mr. PURAS requested additional information concerning the legislative aspects of corporal punishment, as well as attitudes towards such punishment. He asked whether there was general awareness among parents, teachers and politicians that corporal punishment was not necessarily effective and that alternative disciplinary methods existed.

48. Mr. ISSE (Djibouti) said that corporal punishment, or verbal or psychological abuse, of children was strictly prohibited, and provisions to that effect were contained in the regulations of all educational institutions. In two cases, the Minister of Education had brought proceedings against teachers for violence against children, and the teachers in question had received prison sentences.

49. Mr. HERSI (Djibouti) said that the National Human Rights Commission had been established on the basis of the Paris Principles. The membership and operation of the Commission had been established by decree, in order to strengthen the Commission's effectiveness and sustainability. However, the Government was open to suggestions as to what form the regulatory text should take.

50. Mr. HACHI (Djibouti), replying to the question concerning the possibility of a conflict between the Convention and domestic legislation, said that international conventions ratified by Djibouti took precedence over domestic legislation. In cases of conflict between the Convention

and domestic legislation, judicial decisions based on domestic legislation could be challenged in court on the grounds of unconstitutionality, in which case the matter would be referred to the Constitutional Council.

51. Mr. KOTRANE said that, in many countries, the Constitution provided that international conventions, once ratified took precedence over domestic legislation. However, judges could easily argue that such conventions were not self-executing treaties, and required implementing legislation. He wondered whether judges in Djibouti knew about the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and whether the Convention had ever been directly invoked in a court.

52. Mr. HACHI said that personal status judges and registrars had received training in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Efforts were being made to incorporate the provisions of the Convention into domestic legislation, which would make the Convention directly applicable in Djibouti.

53. In his view, customary law was not without value. Custom was considered to be a respectable source of law in many countries.

54. Mr. FILALI said that customary law should either not be applied or should be incorporated into positive law.

55. THE CHAIRPERSON requested additional information on the competence and independence of the National Human Rights Commission, and in particular about its subcommission on the rights of the child. It was important not to confuse the subcommission with a national coordinating body. She asked whether Djibouti had a national coordinating body for children's rights.

56. Mr. HACHI said that the National Human Rights Commission had been established very recently, in 2008. The Commission's governing bureau consisted of a president, vice-president and secretary-general. While the President was a government official, the Vice-President was a member of civil society and a parliamentary representative. While the Commission was publicly funded it could also receive funding from international organizations and national and international NGOs. Members of the Commission would include national human rights associations and NGOs, and other civil society organizations.

57. The CHAIRPERSON enquired whether the National Human Rights Commission was independent of the Government and how its work related to that of the Office of the Ombudsman. She asked how the Commission was funded, how its members were appointed and how many of them were specialists in children's rights.

58. Mr. HERSI (Djibouti) said that the Commission comprised 23 members, one third of whom were from government departments that dealt with human rights, including the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Family Welfare and Social Affairs.

59. The CHAIRPERSON said that, if some of the Commission's members represented government ministries, it was clearly not independent of the Government.

60. Ms. SMITH said that the function of the Commission seemed to be to coordinate the activities of the relevant ministries that dealt with issues relating to children's rights.

61. Mr. PARFITT asked whether the Commission had received accreditation from the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. He requested additional information on procedures for appointing members of the National Human Rights Commission and on the establishment of the subcommission on the rights of the child.
62. Mr. HERSI (Djibouti) said that, since the National Human Rights Commission had been established only very recently, there had not been time to submit the requisite documents to the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions for accreditation. Due note would be taken of the Committee's comments and suggestions concerning how to ensure compliance with the Paris Principles, including the need for the Commission's independent status. The Committee's suggestions regarding the subcommission on the rights of the child would also be taken into account. For budgetary reasons, the subcommission would be the main body dealing with children's issues.
63. One representative of the Office of the Ombudsman was a member of the National Human Rights Commission. The Office, which had been in existence for some time, submitted annual reports to the Government, which were published in the national press.
64. Mr. KOTRANE requested information regarding the status of children born out of wedlock. He asked whether intercountry adoption was allowed and, if so, how the rights and best interests of the children involved were upheld.
65. Although Djibouti's labour laws were in line with international standards, many children worked on the streets and in domestic service. The delegation should indicate what government programmes or institutions had been established to ensure the elimination of child labour and economic exploitation.
66. Since that there were no special juvenile courts and children were not separated from adults in detention centres, he asked how the Government guaranteed that the situation of children in conflict with the law was in keeping with the provisions of the Convention.
67. Mr. PURAS asked what strategy the Government was adopting to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among children. He wished to know how the human rights of children and families affected by HIV/AIDS were protected.
68. In view of the current shortage of health workers, he enquired whether the Government was offering any incentives or allocating greater resources in order to guarantee the minimum staff levels required to keep the health service running effectively.
69. He requested information on children's exposure to alcohol and drugs, as well as information on the Government's policy towards khat, which was widely consumed in Djibouti.
70. He enquired whether the integrated early childhood development programme concluded in 2007 had been evaluated and, if so, what results had been obtained.
71. Although vaccination coverage had improved in recent years, less than half the children in Djibouti were fully vaccinated. Difficulties included parental attitudes and a lack of facilities. He wished to know what steps the Government was taking to address those difficulties.

72. He asked what services were provided for moderately and severely disabled children living at home with their families, and whether such children had access to education. He requested information concerning the situation of disabled children placed in institutions. He enquired whether the Government intended to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

73. Mr. KRAPPMANN asked the delegation to explain why the right to education was not guaranteed under the Constitution. According to one of the Committee's sources, education in Djibouti was "free in principle", and he wondered that meant that there were hidden costs.

74. During the reporting period, school enrolment rates had improved but were not yet satisfactory at the primary school level and were extremely low at the secondary school level. He expressed concern at the high dropout and repetition rates and the fact that street children generally had no access to education and enquired how the Government intended to remedy that situation. He wished to know how many children and adolescents had access to vocational training and whether there was a system to facilitate their integration into the labour market.

75. He enquired whether the Government's increased social expenditure was sufficient to meet the requirements of the Convention, particularly in the light of the current inflation and population growth rates. In 2004, the Government had adopted a poverty reduction strategy that addressed children's general needs and he wondered whether the Government had established specific programmes and facilities for poor families with children, including information campaigns and support centres.

76. Ms. ORTIZ asked whether any new mechanisms had been established to implement the provisions of the Family Code and ensure better care for Djibouti's children. She also asked whether childcare or psychosocial support services were provided at the community level for families in need. She wished to know which body was in charge of such training programmes for parents.

77. She enquired whether any progress had been made with regard to polygamy, which was particularly harmful to children.

78. In its concluding observations on Djibouti's initial report, the Committee had expressed concern about the lack of alternative care facilities, and she wondered whether any progress had been made during the reporting period. She wished to know whether children were placed with foster families or in other temporary facilities.

79. Mr. PARFITT asked whether there was any legislation that enabled the Djiboutian authorities to enforce fulfilment of parental obligations, including the payment of family support by neglectful spouses, particularly in cases of polygamy.

80. Mr. POLLAR asked what measures were being taken to provide special protection for children deprived of parental care. He enquired whether it was mandatory for professionals dealing with children to report cases of abuse and neglect.

81. Ms. KHATTAB said that, although much work had been done in Djibouti to combat female genital mutilation, that practice, particularly infibulation, was still widespread. She wondered whether that practice persisted because of religious beliefs, because it was a lucrative activity for practitioners or because it was a requirement for marriage. She asked what efforts were being made to discourage child marriage, which was prevalent among some tribes.

82. While women enjoyed the same rights as men under Djiboutian legislation, discrimination against women persisted in practice. She wished to know what steps were being taken to raise awareness of that discrimination and its manifestations, such as unreported domestic violence.

83. She enquired whether the main obstacle to the elimination of child labour was the cost of education.

84. Although the report made no mention of the sexual exploitation of children, according to the Committee's sources, street children were often victims of such exploitation. She asked what measures the Government was taking to deal with child prostitution and sexual exploitation.

85. The large numbers of refugees from Somalia arriving in and transiting through Djibouti placed a huge burden on Djibouti's economy. She wondered whether the Government had to shoulder that burden alone, or whether it received international assistance. She requested information concerning the legal situation of the children of refugees seeking asylum in Djibouti.

86. Ms. SMITH enquired whether any special programmes had been devised to reduce Djibouti's high malnutrition levels. She asked whether mobile schools were provided for the children of nomads, who represented between 10 and 15 per cent of the population. The delegation should indicate whether there were any support services for adolescents who were unemployed and not in full-time education.

87. Ms. AIDOO expressed concern about violence against women and children and questioned whether the National Union of Djiboutian Women was the most suitable body to deal with complaints from victims. In Ghana, for example, a branch of the police force had specially trained officers who provided support to victims and dealt with complaints. The police force worked closely with the Ministry of Justice and, when necessary, could prosecute the perpetrators of such violence.

88. Referring to the high rate of teenage pregnancies, she asked whether adolescents were able to seek health care and advice on health problems without parental permission.

89. She welcomed recent legislation on HIV/AIDS and asked how the Solidarity Fund established under Act No. 196/AN/07/5 L operated. In particular, she wished to know whether children in both urban and rural areas benefited from the Fund.

90. She requested detailed statistics concerning the number of orphans and vulnerable children. The replies to the list of issues referred to one orphanage that provided care for 700 orphans. Institutional care was not necessarily the best solution, and she asked whether the Government had considered a more community-based approach to the problem.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.