



## Economic and Social Council

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### Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

#### Forty-third session

#### Summary record of the 32nd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 3 November 2009, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Marchán Romero

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*Combined second, third, fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (continued)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### **Consideration of reports**

**(a) Reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant** (agenda item 6) *(continued)*

*Combined second, third, fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (continued) ([E/C.12/COD/5; list of issues (E/C.12/COD/Q/5); written replies of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the list of issues (E/C.12/COD/Q/5/Add.1 and E/C.12/COD/Q/5/Add.1/Corr.1])*

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo resumed places at the Committee table.*

#### *Articles 6 to 9 of the Covenant*

2. **Mr. Texier** noted that, despite the constitutional and legislative provisions prohibiting forced labour, the security forces had apparently continued to force men, women and even children to work as mine labourers or porters or in domestic service, and that the army had apparently taken no serious action to put an end to those practices. He requested clarification as to whether that situation persisted and whether the recommendations addressed to the State party by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO) had been implemented. Referring to the sale of mines to mining companies and the ensuing expulsion of independent miners that had on occasion resulted in violent clashes with law enforcement officials, he asked whether violence was considered the only way to resolve that problem. He also wished to know whether the independent miners were taken on by the companies concerned or lost their jobs, and whether in the latter case they were duly compensated.

3. It appeared that there was no minimum wage in the public sector, while the minimum wage applied in the private sector was insufficient to enable workers to maintain a decent standard of living. In view of the occupational health and safety problems in the country, especially in the copper and cobalt mining sector, the frequent accidents, including fatal ones, that occurred in that sector, and the lack of own resources reported by the General Labour Inspectorate, it would also be useful to know whether consideration had been given to implementing the recommendations issued by the ILO Committee of Experts in 2008, which called for an increase in the resources made available to the Inspectorate. Lastly, he referred to reports that a number of trade unionists had been victims of either discrimination or more direct violations of their rights, citing three specific examples, and asked the State party what action it planned to take to protect trade unionists in the discharge of their duties.

4. **Ms. Bras Gomes** requested clarification of paragraph 91 (c) of the State party's periodic report, which referred to the liberalization of the diamond industry and trade. More generally, in view of the statements made at the previous meeting regarding the State's lack of control over its natural resources, she wished to know whether the Government had any idea of the impact that the liberalization measures had had in the industry and on the right to work.

5. The delegation should provide examples of specific cases in which penalties had been imposed on violators of the principle of equal pay for equal work, and explain how the relevant procedure was implemented. The lack of information on social security was regrettable, and she therefore wished to know how the reforms referred to by the delegation as being currently under way would address the shortcomings in the system. Lastly, she

requested information on the social security entitlements of workers in the agricultural sector, which was by far the main source of employment, and on the entitlements of self-employed workers.

6. **Mr. Zhan Daode** said that, although the State party's periodic report had been prepared in accordance with the requirements established in the Covenant, it had a number of weaknesses. For example, it detailed an abundance of legislation but contained very little information on the practical impact of that legislation. He joined Ms. Bras Gomes in asking the delegation to cite a specific case in which penalties had been imposed for violation of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

7. **Mr. Kedzia** said that the State party's replies to questions 22 and 23 on the list of issues, concerning the obstruction of trade union activities and the situation of three trade unionists arrested in January 2009, were, in his opinion, too vague. He therefore asked what steps the Government had taken to investigate the cases in question and, if the investigations had been closed, what their outcome had been. He also requested clarification of the steps that the Government had taken to protect the rights of trade unions and trade unionists.

8. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** said that a 78-page report, combining in a single document the second, third, fourth and fifth periodic reports of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the situation in respect of rights as complex as economic, social and cultural rights and covering such a lengthy period, could not give a true picture of the situation or enable members of the Committee to make the informed observations that were needed. Referring to the poor management of public enterprises and the lack of a partnership policy to encourage investment mentioned in the State party's periodic report, he asked why no measures had been adopted to address that situation. He also asked whether the structural adjustment programmes referred to in the report were programmes of international institutions – the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Lastly, noting that the nine measures cited in the report were said to form part of a short- to medium-term strategy, he asked what were the long-term objectives, without which, given the structural nature of the State party's economic difficulties, the right to work would remain a dead letter.

9. **Mr. Riedel** referred to the Congolese Government's efforts to disband armed groups by incorporating their members in the regular armed forces, and the problems arising as a result of violence on the part of certain new recruits, their negative influence, and the corruption attributable to the low level — and in some cases, non-payment — of their wages. He asked how it was planned to restore the value of their wages and thereby combat corruption and put an end to the culture of impunity that protected soldiers guilty of violence against the civilian population.

10. **Mr. Upio Kakura Wapol** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) explained that all the urgent reforms needed in the field of women's rights were under way. The texts had been drafted and submitted to the competent bodies, but the task was an enormous one and Parliament was overburdened.

11. With regard to technical assistance, the Congolese Government was working very closely with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) on legal reforms, the rule of law, justice, police and the armed forces.

12. He wished to refute the statements attributed to him that suggested that the National Commission for Human Rights worked in support of the Government. He emphasized that, in accordance with the Paris Principles, the Commission operated entirely independently, with all the financial autonomy and resources necessary.

13. Forced labour was illegal, although the Government was aware that the problem persisted, including within the armed forces. Any complaints brought to the attention of the authorities were investigated and the appropriate disciplinary or criminal penalties were imposed. The Labour Inspectorate did indeed lack resources but, whenever it became aware of offences, it referred them to the courts.

14. He had no knowledge of specific cases of violation of the principle of equal pay for equal work, and emphasized that such cases must be referred to the courts.

15. The Mbudi Accord had established a minimum wage for public sector employees but budgetary constraints had made it necessary to opt for very gradual implementation of the agreed rises.

16. The issue of occupational health and safety, though very important, should be considered within the context of the country's current situation and level of development. The mining sector was an ageing industry and risks certainly existed, but safety measures had been adopted and some mines had even been closed. However, the situation remained a matter of concern and stringent measures were needed to ensure that mining companies scrupulously observed the applicable regulations.

17. The rights enjoyed by trade unionists as human rights defenders were a key issue. Enforcing human rights in conflict and post-conflict situations entailed risks, but that did not in any way justify the abuses committed by law enforcement officials. Those officials must be punished. Similarly, were a human rights defender, intentionally or otherwise, to engage in acts constituting an offence, the judicial authorities were informed and took the action required, in accordance with the relevant regulations, as was demonstrated by the transparency with which trials involving offences of that nature were conducted. Human rights were now better protected in the Democratic Republic of the Congo than they had been in the past and many had been institutionalized. In addition, a genuine dialogue was maintained with human rights defenders.

18. Allegations of torture and other degrading treatment must be formally reported to the competent authorities in accordance with an official complaints procedure in order to enable the judiciary — now adequately resourced and independent, so that complainants had nothing to fear — to conduct the necessary enquiries. In his view, it was reasonable to affirm that violations of trade union rights were less and less frequent, although once again the State's specific post-conflict situation and the need to consolidate its still fragile peace had to be taken into account.

19. The liberalization of the mining sector had had positive effects, facilitating oversight of the sector and opening up employment opportunities for Congolese workers. Although there was still a sizeable informal economy, the Government was working to expand the formal economy. Workers in that sector were for the most part self-employed. It was true that there were huge problems, which were in part attributable to regulatory compliance failures on the part of the companies that held the operating concessions for the gold and diamond mines. It was necessary to extend the Kimberley Process to other sectors in order to ensure that the revenues generated by liberalized activities gave the State the resources needed to fund social investments.

20. The social security system was currently being reviewed, especially its provisions on retirement and ill health. Mutual insurance associations (*mutuelles*) had been established. The Government was also looking to channel more resources into the provision of assistance for women, given their pivotal role in the household economy, specifically through broader access to microfinance. The Government hoped to be able to construct a more protective social security system very quickly.

21. With regard to structural adjustment programmes and their negative repercussions, he said that he had noted a change in attitudes among IMF and World Bank directors, in that they had begun to propose programmes that took greater account of the human dimension. New partnerships, especially those forged with China, were attracting capital and projects to the country. Legal and tax reforms had created a more favourable business climate that was drawing in investors and opening up significant opportunities in terms of improved working conditions and a stronger labour market.

22. The situation in the armed forces was a critical issue that posed great difficulties. The task at hand entailed integrating members of armed groups operating outside the law in the process of national reconciliation, and that process took time. Human rights violations were severely punished and there had been numerous convictions within the armed forces. A pay monitoring system had been introduced in order to ensure that all soldiers received their pay, irrespective of their location within the country. The Government was aware that reform of the armed forces was essential if the human rights situation was to improve.

23. **Ms. Bras Gomes** asked the delegation to provide more detailed information about the social security reforms, which would enable the Committee to determine whether they addressed the existing shortcomings and to formulate pertinent recommendations on that issue.

24. **Mr. Wapol** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) explained that the information contained in the report reflected the situation obtaining at that time. A new Social Security Code was now in the drafting stages and reforms were planned. He offered to keep the Committee informed about any future developments on that front.

*Articles 10 to 12 of the Covenant*

25. **Mr. Atangana** requested statistical data that could be used to measure the scale of the domestic violence phenomenon. He also asked whether any domestic violence cases had been brought before the courts and, if so, whether any convictions had been handed down. Concrete data on early marriages would also be appreciated. He understood that awareness-raising campaigns had been carried out to alert the population to the risks associated with failure to register births, particularly with regard to the attribution of nationality, and he asked what concrete measures the Government had adopted to reinforce the civil registry system. Lastly, he asked whether the State party was taking steps to extend the ban on corporal punishment to all domains not covered by the current regulatory texts – specifically the family, institutions in which children were placed, and places of work.

26. **Ms. Bras Gomes** asked what follow-up action had been taken, and with what results, on the recommendations of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, who had expressed the view that the Protocol on Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) adopted at the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and ratified by the Democratic Republic of the Congo offered a unique opportunity to develop, in cooperation with the international community, the legal and institutional framework required to enable the Congolese authorities to assume responsibility for IDP protection and assistance.

27. She also requested details of the follow-up to a proposal put forward by the parties involved in the universal periodic review process that encouraged the State party to draft a specific law recognizing the status of its indigenous peoples, who constituted one of its most vulnerable groups, and to establish an official programme for the promotion and protection of minorities, providing for their effective participation in decisions which affected them.

28. She understood that a number of social service initiatives had been planned in 2007 under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2008–2012.

She asked what results had been achieved thus far and what the Government's contribution to the development of social services had been. Lastly, in the light of information indicating that funding for economic, social and cultural projects had fallen between 2004 and 2009, she also wished to know what proportion of the next government budget would be allocated to social services.

29. **Mr. Dasgupta** asked what steps had been taken to ensure that the perpetrators of acts of sexual violence were brought to justice and to prevent the reoccurrence of such acts. In its written replies to the list of issues, the State party indicated that exemplary sentences had been handed down in North Kivu and South Kivu. According to the information available, particularly abhorrent acts of sexual violence had been committed on a wide scale in those provinces. He would also appreciate more detailed information about the number of cases brought before the courts, the number of convictions obtained, and the nature of the sentences. One particularly shocking aspect of that violence was that it was often perpetrated by members of the military or by civilians employed by the State. In addition, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences had recently reported that, although the courts had ordered the Government to pay compensation to women raped by State agents, no compensation had so far been paid to those victims. He therefore asked the Congolese delegation to provide assurances that the Government would duly compensate the victims as soon as possible.

30. **Mr. Pillay** asked for information about programmes to extend access to drinking water and sanitation facilities. Currently, less than half and less than a third of the population, respectively, enjoyed access to those services. He also asked for an explanation of the poverty and lack of basic infrastructures and social services that afflicted the south of Katanga province despite its abundant mining sector revenues.

31. He was disappointed that the delegation had not addressed the issue of poverty in its opening statement at the previous meeting, given that according to the State party's periodic report, 80 per cent of the population survived at the limits of human dignity, on less than US\$ 0.20 a day. He asked whether the situation had improved since the launch of the poverty reduction strategy in 2004 and, if so, to what extent.

32. The periodic report referred to a shortfall of 4 million social housing units, but the written replies mentioned plans to build 1,500 prefabricated social housing units and 4,000 low-rent housing units only. He therefore wished to know what proportion of the State budget was earmarked for housing. It was unfortunate that the report contained no statistics on the homeless, despite giving a fairly detailed description of that population group.

33. Lastly, he referred to an incident of forced eviction that had occurred on 18 March 2003 in the locality of Kasa Vubu in Kinshasa, in which 315 families had been forcibly expelled by the authorities, without compensation and without prior consultation, even though they possessed land occupancy deeds that the judicial authorities had confirmed to be valid and a court had ruled against the expulsions. Objections had also been raised in Parliament. The principles set out in the Committee's general comment No. 7 (1997) concerning forced evictions had not been observed in that matter. He therefore asked the delegation to clarify the Government's current position on that issue, and whether steps had been taken either to compensate the families affected or provide them with alternative housing, as the provisions of general comment No. 7 required.

34. **Mr. Sa'di** was concerned about the scale of trafficking and prostitution, particularly of children, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and about the related incidents of child rape. The figures available to the Committee indicated that the perpetrators of such crimes were for the most part members of the security forces. He asked the delegation to provide more detailed information on that issue, and, specifically, to explain what form of investigations had been undertaken and why that particular problem continued to grow.

Lastly, the State party's report indicated that the law prohibited marriage before the age of 8, which meant that marriage was permitted upon reaching that age. Unless the figure was an error, that situation was unacceptable.

35. **Mr. Schrijver** noted that the State party's poverty index was alarmingly high and that it was unlikely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. He asked whether any structural policies had been developed to combat trafficking in human beings, particularly children, and what concrete measures had been adopted to that end. Noting also that access to food was very limited, he asked whether any national food programmes had been implemented to alleviate that situation. Lastly, he asked whether the Congolese Government had requested any specific, technical, scientific or other form of assistance that would enable the State party to better fulfil its obligations under the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

36. **Mr. Zhan Daode** recalled that the Democratic Republic of the Congo had one of the highest maternal mortality rates in Africa and asked what measures the Government envisaged adopting in order to remedy that situation.

37. **Mr. Kedzia** recalled that several United Nations bodies had expressed concern about sexual violence against women and children in the State party. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child had put together some very useful recommendations on that issue. He asked the delegation to provide more detailed information on the action taken in pursuance of those recommendations, including, in particular, any plans to implement the proposal by the Committee on the Rights of the Child for the establishment of a telephone helpline for children. He also wished to know whether early or forced marriages were considered a social problem and, if so, whether a remedial plan of action was envisaged. More specifically, he asked whether the State party envisaged amending the Family Code to align it with international standards concerning the legal age of marriage for women.

38. **Ms. Bonoan-Dandan** asked for more detail about child witches and the ill-treatment that they suffered. She also wished to know whether any progress had been made in prosecuting offences of that kind. With regard to the torture of children, which was punishable by up to 5 years' imprisonment, she requested clarification of the very significant improvements mentioned by the State party in its response to the Committee's questions concerning the prosecution of those crimes. With regard to the protection of the most vulnerable children, she asked what action the State party had taken in pursuance of the very specific recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning trafficking in children for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour, particularly those relating to the definition of that crime.

39. With regard to the right to food, it was stated in the State party's report that the conditions of access to food were deplorable and that the Government planned a number of measures to remedy that situation. On that point, she requested an update on the programme mentioned in the report that encompassed agrarian reform, fishing and promoting women's access to land, and asked whether any advances had been made in those areas.

40. **Mr. Riedel** recalled that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was a very rich country that could satisfy the food needs of its entire population from domestic production if its food programmes and agricultural reforms were effectively implemented. The potential wealth of the State party in the areas of livestock rearing, fishing and farming was extremely under-exploited. Information about any measures adopted to address that situation would therefore be appreciated.

41. With regard to living conditions and hygiene in prisons, the State party's report stated that detainees' daily food rations were often inadequate and, according to various sources, deaths in custody were frequent. In its replies, the State party cited a number of

measures to be taken to relieve overcrowding, facilitate conditional release, build separate prison wings for women and children, increase the budget allocated to penal institutions, and even develop prison farms. However, information on what concrete action, if any, had been taken was required.

42. Lastly, he asked the delegation to indicate how the State party envisaged implementing the National Multisectoral Programme to Combat HIV/AIDS. Important measures had been implemented in urban areas, but it would be useful to know what action had been taken in rural areas, particularly in terms of improving access to treatment, and to have more detailed information on the availability of antiretrovirals for pregnant women.

43. **Mr. Upio Kakura Wapol** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the State party was a country under construction, where peace and democracy still needed to be consolidated and conditions conducive to the emergence of a society in which human rights were truly respected had yet to be established. The Government planned to establish a national statistics institute that would compile statistical data on questions such as domestic violence, early marriage, the registration of births and corporal punishment. An awareness-raising campaign had been launched to encourage the registration of births but, in the aftermath of the war, the entire system needed rebuilding. Computerized civil registry systems had been piloted in certain cities, and were due for gradual roll-out across the rest of the country. A new population census would also be carried out in the near future. With regard to corporal punishment, he said that there was no system that sanctioned the use of disciplinary measures of that kind in the workplace. Such acts constituted offences that were punishable by law.

44. The number of internally displaced persons in the country (4 to 5 million) was a matter of concern. With assistance from a number of organizations, including the World Food Programme and the International Committee of the Red Cross in areas liberated from the armed groups, the Congolese Government was endeavouring to implement urgent humanitarian measures that would enable displaced persons to return to their land and guarantee their access to housing, water and food. With regard to the representation of indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups, including women and children, the Government had applied positive discrimination to foster their broader participation in political life and decisions affecting them. It would not be possible to increase funding for basic social services and social security until there was a significant increase in the State budget. The steps taken to shore up the domestic economy, and the oil sector in particular, should allow for a two to threefold increase in the budget in the years ahead, but the current budget of 5.3 billion dollars was clearly still insufficient.

45. The Congolese Government had resolved to turn the spotlight on the issue of sexual violence against women and girls and had encouraged Congolese women to break their silence. Sentences had been handed down against members of the armed forces and the police, although the majority of such violations had occurred not in areas controlled by the security forces but in uncontrolled areas of conflict. Furthermore, sexual violence and rape were increasingly committed by minors against other minors. On that point, in response to a question from one of the Committee members, it was important to emphasize that Congolese law defined a minor as a person under the age of 18. Violence among minors raised problems in terms of the criminal penalties to be imposed. A campaign had been launched to raise public awareness of the danger of that phenomenon, which required a multisectoral response. The Government had established a national agency to combat violence against women and children, which would be responsible for harmonizing the strategies and actions implemented in that area. It also intended to pay compensation to victims whenever such crimes were perpetrated by persons for whom the State was responsible under civil law, and a special fund would be created for that purpose. In addition, the Government had recently adopted a policy of zero tolerance for crimes of that



nature, and numerous sentences had already been handed down, including some against high-ranking officials.

46. Responsibility for coordinating the overall implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child lay with the Ministry of Human Rights, working in conjunction with UNICEF. The problem of forced and early marriages, which was a priority concern for the Government, was primarily attributable to the coexistence of two conflicting systems – the system established in written law and the customary system. Engineering a change in customs, while ensuring strict observance of the law, would take time. With regard to street children (estimated to number 50,000 nationwide, with 13,000 in Kinshasa alone), steps had been taken to provide shelter and support. Since vagrancy was an offence under existing legislation, children in conflict with the law had to be dealt with by the justice system; accordingly, judges would henceforth be given special training on how to handle cases involving juvenile delinquents. The child-witch phenomenon, for which it appeared that the evangelical churches should be held responsible, seemed to be on the decline thanks to statutory provisions adopted to that end, and very few new cases were being reported. With regard to trafficking in children, the Government was currently carrying out a sensitization and education campaign to raise awareness of the problem.

47. Access to water was one of the five priorities singled out in the State party's "*Cinq Chantiers*" national programme of action. With assistance from UNICEF, the Government was currently implementing a massive gravity-flow water supply project in rural areas, besides rolling out a rural electrification system. Lack of housing was a problem mainly in urban areas; social housing units had been built in Kinshasa, and a phased programme was being implemented pending the launch of a credit system operated by the housing banks. No statistics on homelessness were available, but the number of homeless people appeared to be rising in line with population displacements. With regard to the 315 families evicted from their homes so that a modern hospital could be built, he explained that their plight was attributable to a lengthy period of total dysfunction, and the fact that the legislation in place had finally been applied.

48. The massive amount of poverty in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was due to the global financial crisis, which had taken a heavy toll on a country largely dependent on exports for revenue. To remedy that situation, the Government was pursuing a growth and poverty reduction strategy, developed in association with its historical partners, the IMF and the World Bank. It was important to emphasize the paradox inherent in the situation of a county that was crippled by poverty despite the abundant mineral and natural wealth in its subsoil. An infrastructure development programme focusing specifically on road construction had been implemented to ensure that all villages were connected by road and that people could thus cultivate the land more easily and improve their level of nutrition and, by extension, their quality of life. A land reform process had already begun and a new agricultural law was currently before Parliament. However, that process raised the problematic issue of the return of the roughly 3 million internally displaced persons who, after three years of absence, found their land occupied by others. Prison food was another problem that the Government was working to address. It had successfully launched a system of prison farms at which detainees could perform community service. Steps were also being taken to relieve prison overcrowding.

49. A community health-care system had been developed to help reduce maternal mortality. The authorities were also engaged in a vigorous campaign to combat childhood illnesses, and that campaign was already yielding positive results. The National Multisectoral Programme to Combat HIV/AIDS had been rolled out in all provinces and encompassed the distribution of antiretroviral drugs and condoms as well as awareness-raising campaigns. A study had recently been conducted jointly with the World Bank to

identify the best way to strengthen that programme and guarantee free access to antiretroviral treatment.

50. More general measures taken included the development of an ambitious recovery programme, but the State party needed financial and human resources. In that regard, the organization of a donor conference, as had been requested several years earlier in Paris, would be helpful, as would the effective implementation of resolution 7/20 and resolution 10/33 adopted by the Human Rights Council in March 2008 and March 2009, respectively. While the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo had obligations to fulfil, mobilization and action by the international community were also vital. It seemed only fair that a country that was making a substantial contribution on the environmental front should benefit from compensation, and the delegation would be certain to emphasize that point at the Climate Change Conference due to take place in Copenhagen in December 2009. Agreements previously concluded, with China in particular, had allowed for major projects to be undertaken, but substantial resources would be needed if all the challenges were to be addressed. Lastly, referring to the scale of the task for which he was responsible, which involved drafting reports and monitoring implementation of the recommendations formulated by each treaty body on a daily basis, he suggested a review of that process with a view to streamlining and simplifying the mechanism.

51. **Mr. Dasgupta** asked for clarification of the level of funds earmarked in the budget for the payment of compensation to rape victims and the amount of the compensation payments actually made. He also requested an update on the specific cases cited by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and the compensation, if any, that had been paid to the victims in those cases. He also asked the delegation to provide the Committee with details of the sentences imposed on the perpetrators of the rapes in Katanga.

*Articles 13 to 15*

52. **Mr. Kerdoun** asked whether the State party had met its target of achieving free universal education at all levels (primary, secondary and higher education) by 2009, and whether it planned to introduce school transport systems, especially in rural environments, to encourage attendance. He further requested details of any plans to establish preschools that would allow for a greater number of children under the age of 6 to be properly prepared for normal school attendance.

53. Referring to the percentages given in paragraph 83 of the written replies to the list of issues (E/C.12/COD/Q/5/Add.1), he wished to know whether the 10 per cent threshold that constituted the State party's target budget allocation for education had been reached in 2009. He also asked whether the implementing measures for the law on child protection promulgated in January 2009, which were referred to in paragraph 84 of the written replies, were now ready. With regard to paragraphs 86 and 87 of the written replies, he requested detailed information on the incentives that the Government planned to introduce for the teaching profession, including a breakdown of the planned salary increases by level of education. Lastly, he noted that the fact that there were three separate ministries responsible for education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo resulted in ineffectual management of a sector both critical and strategic to the reconstruction of the Congolese nation and the development of its next generation of citizens.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*