



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**  
**Thirty-ninth session**

**Summary record of the 797th meeting (Chamber B)**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 26 July 2007, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson*: Ms. Dairiam (Rapporteur)

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*In the absence of Ms. Šimonovič, Ms. Dairiam, Rapporteur, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

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

*Second and third periodic reports of Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/2; CEDAW/C/LIE/Q/3 and Add.1; and CEDAW/C/LIE/3; CEDAW/C/LIE/Q/3 and Add.1)*

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

2. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein), introducing his country's second and third periodic reports, said that his Government considered all human rights to be universal, indivisible and interdependent and attached great importance to the implementation of international and regional human rights agreements. It was committed to strengthening the system of human rights protection within the framework of the United Nations and was actively involved in debating the reform of the treaty bodies. Since the legal equality of women and men had been enshrined in the Liechtenstein Constitution in 1992 and since Liechtenstein had ratified the Convention in 1996, the principle of equality had been established in the country's legal framework governing education, politics and social security. Women had become aware of the opportunities available to them and of the contribution that they could make to the development of a democratic and egalitarian society.

3. Additional steps had been taken during the reporting period to establish the necessary legal framework for ensuring equality. In December 2004, Parliament had incorporated European Union Directive 2002/73/EC into domestic legislation and had amended the 1999 Gender Equality Act accordingly. Legal provisions on parental leave and pension schemes had been enacted in accordance with the aim of the Directive to ensure the equal treatment of men and women in the workplace.

4. Liechtenstein had ratified the Optional Protocol in 2002 and had accepted the authority of the Committee to review alleged violations of the Convention. In spite of those legal measures, some action was still needed to achieve de facto equality, and

his Government continued to promote measures aimed at better reconciling family obligations and employment and at enhancing women's participation in political and economic decision-making. To achieve those goals, the Government was actively engaged in the lengthy process of raising awareness and had received assistance from women's organizations to carry out that task.

5. The Government attached great importance to regional cooperation in the area of gender equality, and the Office of Equal Opportunity had established a wide range of contacts with organizations in Switzerland and Austria. Due to the low absolute numbers in a country of Liechtenstein's size, statistical data was often very volatile. For that reason, the exchange of information and data through regional cooperation allowed the Government to assess and compare the effectiveness of certain measures from a more general perspective. Successful cross-border projects had been completed on raising awareness about domestic violence and on preparing women to participate in political and public bodies.

6. With regard to violence against women and girls, the revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure and the development of the Victims Assistance Act had enhanced the protection offered to victims. The aim of the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code was to improve the legal standing of victims by establishing a procedural right to respectful treatment and the greatest possible protection. In particular, the interests of young victims and victims of sexual offences would be better taken into account. The inclusion of protective questioning allowed witnesses to be questioned in a separate room from the perpetrator.

7. Victims who were in particular need of protection would in general only appear before the court once, and young witnesses would be questioned by experts in order to reduce the psychological burden. In addition, the legislative amendments offered greater protection by providing assistance to victims and assigning them a confidant, by imposing confidentiality and disclosure requirements and by ensuring the exclusion of the public from trials and enforcing publication and broadcasting prohibitions.

8. The adoption of the Victims Assistance Act in June 2007 represented an important step towards the realization of the principle of equality because most of the victims of the offences covered by the Act were

women and girls. The two pillars of the Act were counselling and financial assistance. A Victims Counselling Office had been established and counselling services that dealt with the victims of criminal offences were being developed.

9. In the area of financial assistance, comprehensive legal aid was provided to cover the costs of proceedings and legal counsel, according to the victim's financial situation. The provisions of the Victims Assistance Act enabled victims to receive compensation from the State for material and non-material injuries. The compensation of non-material injuries was intended to reflect society's recognition of the difficult situation faced by victims of sexual offences, who often suffered from serious non-material injuries.

10. At its June 2007 session, Parliament had approved the introduction of a criminal provision on stalking to penalize forms of harassment such as entering into close proximity with the victim, making phone calls or using other forms of communication to contact the victim and using the victim's personal data to order goods or allow another person to make contact with the victim. The provision on stalking would make an important contribution to protecting women because it would allow the police to intervene at an early stage and before a violent act had been committed.

11. Liechtenstein had been a member of the European Economic Area since 1995, and approximately two thirds of European Union law was applied in Liechtenstein. Important European acts that Liechtenstein had adopted in the last two years in the area of gender equality included directives on part-time work, on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex, and on parental leave. In 2007, Liechtenstein was participating in the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All with a series of activities aimed at raising awareness about the right to equality and non-discrimination, multiple discrimination, integration of victims of discrimination, appreciation of diversity and promotion of a tolerant society.

12. The Office of Social Affairs and the Office of Equal Opportunity were conducting studies and surveys on poverty, age discrimination and social discrimination against people with disabilities and homosexuals. A meeting on the topic of gender medicine and equal opportunities in the workplace had been planned by the Office of Equal Opportunity. The

results of the studies and surveys would offer valuable information and would give important guidance for future measures. The Government would include the outcomes of the studies in its next report to the Committee.

#### *Articles 1 to 6*

13. **Ms. Šimonović** said that it would be interesting to know whether the Convention had been invoked in legal proceedings and whether the judiciary was provided with training relating to the Convention. The reporting State should clarify whether it was possible to invoke article 4.1 of the Convention in order to establish the legal grounds for the applicability of temporary special measures.

14. **Mr. Flinterman** said that it would be useful to know whether the Gender Equality Act would be expanded to cover all areas or whether another act with a wider scope would be enacted. Further clarification should be provided on the universal prohibition of discrimination stipulated by the Gender Equality Act and the definition of discrimination under the Act. In addition, it would be useful to know whether the definition of discrimination contained in article 1 of the Convention had been incorporated into domestic legislation or whether that definition was directly applicable in legal proceedings.

15. Additional information should be provided on the number of complaints filed on the grounds of wage discrimination and sexual harassment. In addition, it would be interesting to know the number of court cases in general that had been initiated by women in Liechtenstein and the possibilities afforded to women to exhaust domestic remedies. Lastly, he also wished to know whether the Government planned to withdraw its reservation to article 1 of the Convention and requested clarification concerning the definition of that reservation.

16. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** said that it would be interesting to have additional information on the expansion and competencies of the Office of Equal Opportunity. Clarification should be provided as to whether the Office of Equal Opportunity had a degree of autonomy from the Government. It would also be useful to learn more about the scope of the Government's policy on women and on the use of the Convention as a basis for policies. Additional information should be provided on the results produced

by the initiatives on gender equality controlling and on the linguistic equal treatment of men and women.

17. **Ms. Saiga** enquired how the activities of the Office of Equal Opportunity and the Gender Equality Commission were interrelated and whether the Office continued to serve as a first recourse centre for women whose rights had been violated, as its predecessor, the Office of Gender Equality, had done. She also sought information regarding how many women had used the Office as a first recourse centre to date, whether there had been any difference in the numbers of women seeking assistance since the Office had been upgraded and what types of services the Office provided.

18. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that the Convention, like any other international treaty, was directly applicable to the extent that its provisions were sufficiently precise. If not, then it was applied through relevant national legal instruments. With regard to temporary special measures, the positive measures taken by the Government to accelerate de facto equality of women would qualify as temporary special measures. He was not aware of any plans to adopt a more comprehensive piece of legislation to supplement the Gender Equality Act, although, as his introductory statement had illustrated, legal measures were still being introduced to address specific equality issues.

19. He did not have any data on cases brought by women before national courts, but undertook to supply that information at a later time. In his view, the requirement that women must exhaust national and local remedies was not an obstacle to their seeking redress at the international level in accordance with the Optional Protocol. If no women had done so, it was no doubt partly because the European Convention on Human Rights was better known and more deeply ingrained in the consciousness of Liechtenstein nationals, most of whom would therefore probably choose to lodge any complaints of alleged human rights violations with the European Court of Human Rights.

20. With respect to Liechtenstein's reservation to article 1 of the Convention, it was very specific and narrow in scope, and it was also clearly defined. His Government was therefore of the view that it was fully compatible both with article 28 of the Convention and with the general provisions of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. Moreover, because of the dual system described in Liechtenstein's response to

question 2 of the Committee's list of issues and questions (CEDAW/C/LIE/Q/3/Add.1), it was not legally possible for the Government to withdraw the reservation, which pertained to the Law on the Princely House.

21. **Ms. Kubik** (Liechtenstein) said that Liechtenstein had introduced some special, or positive, measures, although they did not have any binding legal force. Those measures included several courses aimed at empowering women and encouraging their participation in politics. In addition, the Office of Equal Opportunity maintained a database of women who were interested in becoming active in politics, which political parties could consult if they were seeking a female candidate from a certain field. The Office also provided financial assistance to women for retraining.

22. Regarding the definition of discrimination in the Equal Opportunity Act, direct discrimination was defined as a situation in which a person was disadvantaged on the basis of gender. Indirect discrimination was discrimination in which apparently neutral regulations, criteria or procedures might place a person at a disadvantage with respect to people of the opposite sex, unless the regulations, criteria or procedures were justified by a legally valid objective and the means used for achieving that objective were appropriate and required. A very important aspect of the revision of the Equal Opportunity Act was an expansion of the law to allow associations to bring legal action. Hence, an association or organization could now bring a lawsuit for discrimination on behalf of an individual.

23. She did not have any information on complaints filed under the Gender Equality Act in the private sector, but in the public sphere one complaint had been lodged to date, and the complainant had received the difference in compensation that she had demanded. Since the adoption of the Equal Opportunity Act, the Office of Equal Opportunity had mounted two information campaigns to make both employers and employees aware of the Act and to inform employees of their right to demand the enforcement of their rights. The Office had also published a brochure on sexual harassment in the workplace, which had been distributed nationwide.

24. The upgrading of the Office of Equal Opportunity had entailed a broadening of its areas of responsibility

to encompass not just discrimination based on sex, but also based on disability, sexual orientation, and other factors. Staff had also been added. The Gender Equality Commission remained active, but it focused only on equal rights for men and women, serving as an advisory body to the Government. There were also several other bodies that dealt with gender equality issues and gender mainstreaming within the Government.

25. The Office of Equal Opportunity did continue to serve as a first recourse centre in its expanded sphere of action, playing mainly a consultative and coordinating role. It received 180 to 200 enquiries a year on matters having to do with equal rights, approximately 80 per cent of them from women. Gender-neutral language was a frequent subject of such enquires, as were sexual harassment in the workplace and issues relating to separation and divorce. There were also requests for publications and enquiries about courses and lectures being organized by the Office. There had not been any noticeable change in the number of enquiries received since the Office of Gender Equality had become the Office of Equal Opportunity. The Office sometimes took action on enquiries itself, but it was mainly a triage body, channelling enquiries appropriately or referring users to other offices for assistance.

26. The Office was not fully independent, but it was autonomous with regard to certain functions, such as public relations, conducting studies, and advising and making recommendations to Government authorities and private individuals with respect to equal opportunities. The Office was also responsible for implementing relevant decisions of the national Government; preparing, in cooperation with public and private organizations, programmes for the advancement of women; carrying out projects; and reviewing applications for financial assistance from private organizations, which were entitled under the Equality Opportunity Act to request such assistance in order to implement certain projects or activities.

27. Regarding gender equality controlling, or assessment, the procedure was to visit Government offices and interview staff members on issues related to gender equality, using a questionnaire designed specially for that purpose. The responses were then analysed and objectives were set, in consultation with the office in question. In the pilot phase, the exercise had been conducted in two offices, and it was hoped

that it could be extended to other offices in the near future. As for linguistic equal treatment, to facilitate compliance with the requirement that gender-neutral language must be used in all Government communications, examples and guidelines had been distributed to all Government offices and a dictionary of alternative non-sexist terms had been created.

28. **Mr. Ritter** (Liechtenstein) said that Liechtenstein had not incorporated information on the Convention into the training of law students, lawyers and judges because it had no law schools; lawyers in Liechtenstein received their training in Switzerland. However, the Office for Foreign Affairs did endeavour to publicize events such as the current dialogue with the Committee with a view to informing lawyers about the Convention. It also made information on the Convention available to any legal professional who requested it.

29. Following a revision of the Constitution, the Constitutional Court had been given competence to hear all cases involving alleged violations of human rights instruments in respect of which Liechtenstein had accepted individual complaint procedures. The aim of that change had been to streamline domestic procedure and make it easier for individuals to lodge complaints. Echoing Mr. Wenaweser's comments concerning the European Convention on Human Rights, he noted that six years had elapsed after the entry into force of that instrument before the first complaint was filed, although the European Convention was well known in Liechtenstein and was certainly included in the training of its lawyers.

30. While Liechtenstein's policies on labour and economic matters were indeed heavily influenced by European Union directives, on issues related to gender equality, such as violence against women, the Convention and the general recommendations of the Committee played a very important role in the establishment of policies and measures.

31. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein), referring to the issue of violence against women, noted that the Special Rapporteur on violence against women of the Commission on Human Rights (subsequently renamed the Human Rights Council) had visited Liechtenstein at the invitation of the Government several years earlier.

32. **Ms. Arocha Domínguez** pointed out that Liechtenstein's small size brought advantages as well as disadvantages. Referring to article 4 of the

Convention, she said that the report contained very little information on the implementation of temporary special measures. It was therefore not clear whether the Government fully understood the concept and purpose of such measures. While the *Berufs-Impulsjahr* (career guidance year) was a commendable initiative designed to improve women's access to the labour market, she was not sure that it could be described as a temporary special measure. In particular, the limited duration of the initiative meant that the ultimate objective of temporary special measures, i.e. de facto equality between women and men, was unlikely to be achieved.

33. **Ms. Šimonović** noted that, under article 31 of the State party's Constitution, women and men must be accorded the same legal treatment. The Committee was curious about the relationship between that provision and article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and wished to know, in particular, which took precedence. Referring to the Committee's general recommendation No. 25, she also enquired whether any quota systems to guarantee women's participation in political and public life had been introduced. Could such quotas be introduced in the absence of specific legislative measures providing for differential treatment?

34. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that he had referred to Liechtenstein's small size in order to provide a context for some of the information provided in the reports, not in order to make excuses for any shortcomings in the implementation of the Convention. He agreed that the size and location of his country, as well as its membership of the European Union, did bring considerable advantages. With regard to the questions put by Ms. Šimonović, article 31 of the Constitution and article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention were neither contradictory nor mutually exclusive. It would be possible to introduce quota systems without additional legislation, but no such systems currently existed.

35. **Mr. Ritter** (Liechtenstein) recalled that general recommendation No. 23 described a series of temporary special measures designed to increase women's participation in political and public life, such as the provision of financial assistance and training to female electoral candidates. Those measures had proved effective in other countries and could also have the desired effect in Liechtenstein. Indeed, a number of NGOs had expressed the view that additional assistance from the State in that regard would be very useful.

36. In accordance with general recommendation No. 23, States had an obligation to ensure that temporary special measures were clearly designed to support the principle of equality and that they complied with constitutional principles guaranteeing equality to all citizens. In his view, therefore, the career guidance year, which was actually an ongoing initiative — four separate projects had been implemented to date — could be described as a temporary special measure. Although political parties in Liechtenstein had discussed the possibility of introducing quota systems for women on several occasions, they had not yet garnered enough support for their proposals. There were no particular obstacles preventing women from putting themselves forward as electoral candidates, and at the most recent municipal elections women and men had had an almost equal chance of being elected.

37. **Mr. Flinterman** welcomed the State party's willingness to engage in international cooperation on issues relating to women's rights. In that connection, he would be interested to know whether the Government of Liechtenstein interpreted article 3 of the Convention as having extraterritorial scope. In other words, did the Government view its efforts in the field of international cooperation on women's rights as an integral part of its obligations under article 3?

38. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that, in his view, article 3 of the Convention did not have extraterritorial application. While international cooperation in the area of women's rights did reflect the spirit of the Convention, primary responsibility for the protection of those rights clearly lay with individual States. At the international level, Liechtenstein's efforts to empower women focused on two issues: their rights as enshrined in the Convention and their indispensable role in the process of sustainable development.

39. **Ms. Coker-Appiah** said that States parties to the Convention often encountered obstacles when implementing the provisions of article 5 because changing behavioural patterns was a notoriously difficult undertaking. The Committee commended the Government for the steps that it had taken to comply with its obligations under article 5, but expressed some concerns about the approach taken. Referring in particular to the Fathers' Day project mentioned on page 22 of the third periodic report, she wondered why children visited their fathers in the workplace and not their mothers. It was important to dismantle gender

stereotypes by showing children that both men and women could engage in productive activities outside the home. She also enquired whether the Girls' Rooms referred to in the third periodic report had been established, and cautioned against the introduction of any measures that would further segregate the genders.

40. The Committee welcomed the State party's adoption of measures designed to prevent violence against women, especially the new Violence Protection Act. However, she wished to know whether migrant women living in Liechtenstein, who were often confined to the home, were aware of the protections afforded by domestic legislation. Had any targeted campaigns been launched to raise their awareness of their rights?

41. **Ms. Kubik** (Liechtenstein) said that the Images of Men group had been established with a view to challenging men's understanding of their role within the family and involving them in discussions about equal opportunities. To date, three Fathers' Day projects had been implemented, and a fourth was anticipated. Efforts had been made to evaluate their impact by interviewing fathers and teachers and obtaining their impressions, and, in her view, the projects had been very successful: over 400 fathers had participated. There were currently no plans to extend the projects to include mothers, but she would certainly convey the Committee's suggestions to the relevant authorities. Unfortunately, she did not have any additional information about the Girls' Centres, but would ensure that further details were included in the next periodic report.

42. With regard to violence against women, the statistics indicated that migrant women were aware of the protective measures and victim support services available. Indeed, the Women's Information and Contact Office had won the 2000 Equality Prize for a project designed to facilitate migrant women's integration into society. German language classes for mothers and children were also offered, so that migrant women could counter their isolation by taking their children to local playgroups. In addition, the Government intended to amend immigration legislation so as to stipulate that all immigrants were required to attend language classes. That provision was essential if all individuals living in Liechtenstein were to have access to information about their rights.

43. **Ms. Šimonović** said that, while the Committee had received information from four NGOs, no such organizations were actually present at the thirty-ninth session. She enquired as to the reasons for their absence. Some NGOs had suggested that the Fathers' Day projects were only partially effective because they did not focus specifically on girls: boys did not need any extra encouragement to enter traditionally male professions. She therefore wondered whether any additional measures had been taken to raise girls' awareness of the possibility of pursuing non-traditional careers. In his introductory statement, the representative of the State party had indicated that changing attitudes was a long-term process that had to be driven by women themselves. She cautioned against placing such a burden on women, and underlined the Government's responsibilities in that regard.

44. **Ms. Tan** enquired whether the State party had any plans to introduce paid parental leave. Since women were far more likely to take parental leave than men, there should be some mechanism in place to compensate them for loss of earnings and missed professional opportunities.

45. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that, historically, NGOs had been the catalysts for the promotion of women's rights in Liechtenstein. They were able to participate in related political processes through, inter alia, the Office of Equal Opportunity, and so he did not know why no NGOs were present at the current session of the Committee: to his knowledge, the Government had not received any applications for funding in that regard.

46. He agreed that the Government had an important role to play in facilitating activities designed to raise awareness of women's rights. However, it was accurate to say that attitudes changed very slowly and that the people themselves were the most effective drivers of change. With regard to parental leave, he pointed out that the three-month period of unpaid leave referred to in the report was supplementary to maternity leave and that relatively a high number of men were availing themselves of that opportunity. Although some political parties took the view that parental leave should be remunerated, there was little chance that such an arrangement would be adopted in the foreseeable future.

47. **Ms. Kubik** (Liechtenstein) said that the Fathers' Day projects had served to broaden girls' horizons by

providing them with information on non-traditional careers. In addition, careers workshops specifically geared towards girls had been organized. In addition, Parliament was currently reviewing a petition on paid parental leave that had been submitted by a number of political parties. It was due to give its views on the petition in September 2007.

48. **Mr. Ritter** (Liechtenstein) stressed that the data available on parental leave concerned companies with 250 or more employees. Small enterprises, which formed a significant part of the State party's economic structure, found it difficult to grant such leave, not so much because of the financial implications as on account of the arrangements needed to cope with the resulting absence of employees.

49. **Ms. Kubik** (Liechtenstein) said that five of the eight employees in the national administration who had taken parental leave since its introduction had been men and that in some cases they had done so on a part-time basis.

#### *Articles 7 to 9*

50. **Ms. Zou** Xiaojiao noted that while women's participation in political life between 1995 and 2005 had increased at Parliament and municipal levels, it was still low and had, moreover, decreased at Government level. She asked what measures had been taken to attain the goal set by the Gender Equality Commission of increasing the share of women in the 2007 elections. The Committee would also like to know how many women had taken part in the training courses to prepare women for political life and what results had been achieved. Was participation purely voluntary or were there criteria for selection? Would such courses be continued?

51. Information would also be appreciated as to the reasons for the apparent reluctance to adopt a quota system, the Government's attitude to such a system and the likelihood of it being made legally binding in the future. She expressed concern that the degree to which women participated in public and political life seemed to be determined by their own personal interest, as did their inclusion in the women's pool set up for the purposes of the "two-thirds resolution", referred to in the third periodic report (CEDAW/C/LIE/3, p. 33). Lastly, she wondered whether the Government was being too passive and shirking its responsibility of

motivating women and encouraging them to come forward.

52. **Ms. Belmihoub -Zerdani** called in turn for greater efforts to enhance the participation of women in public and political life. She wondered whether the possibility had been considered of allowing the relatively large foreign population of the country to vote in municipal elections and also raised the question of the citizenship rights of the foreign spouses of Liechtenstein nationals. Was it possible, in particular, under the Constitution, for foreign women to be granted the right to vote? On the possibility of a quota system, she emphasized that the State party had not entered any reservations under article 4 and that the introduction of such a system was perhaps the only way of improving the representation of women in Parliament. Steps should also be taken to sensitize boys to women's issues, in particular by combating gender stereotypes in school textbooks, given the apparently unfavourable attitude of young male voters towards women candidates.

53. **Mr. Wenaweser** (Liechtenstein) said that, with such a small population and so few ministerial posts, statistics on women's representation were misleading and that, in any case, no linear progression could be identified or expected. Article 4.1 of the Convention provided for the possibility of temporary special measures; it did not create any obligation in that regard. The issue of a possible quota system had been under discussion for several years but had failed to generate sufficient political support. Liechtenstein had achieved perfect gender parity in its diplomatic service, which could perhaps offer an example for other spheres.

54. He had taken note of the comment that the Government was too passive in its promotion of women and likewise of the suggestion that conditions might be created for foreigners to participate in elections. The possibility of citizenship was in any case open to foreigners, following 12 years of residence in the country, with each year after marriage counting double. While the suggestion that foreigners be allowed to participate in municipal elections merited reflection, it had to be borne in mind that municipal councils played a more important role in the national political structure of Liechtenstein than they did elsewhere. The possibility of amending the Constitution to that effect might, however, be entertained.



55. **Ms. Kubik** (Liechtenstein) said that the politics courses for women had been organized in cooperation with a neighbouring region of Austria. There had so far been three such courses, to each of which Liechtenstein had been able to nominate 10 participants; of the 27 women who had benefited from the courses, nine were currently engaged in political life or had been candidates for electoral office. Participation was voluntary; invitations were sent to all economically active women in the country, including all women members of national and municipal commissions, and the courses were also announced in the two national newspapers, which were distributed to all households. The only criterion for eligibility was the current or intended involvement of applicants in public or political life. The fourth such course was currently in progress and would be followed by a fifth, in 2008. An analysis had been conducted of the excellent results achieved, in the light of which some topics would be explored in greater depth in future courses.

56. The database compiled to enhance the participation of women in political and public life had been built up on the basis of replies to a questionnaire listing all the 50 or so advisory commissions serving the Government in a wide variety of areas. In the light of information thus obtained about the field of interest and experience of women, efforts were made to meet the requests made by political parties or women's organizations for women candidates. That was one of the means used to encourage women to seek nominations. That effort did not rely solely on the prior interest shown by women but actively encouraged it, notably by way of nationwide poster campaigns and recruitment projects, spearheaded by the Gender Equality Commission.

57. **Mr. Ritter** (Liechtenstein) said that the possibility of foreigners voting in municipal elections had already been discussed in Liechtenstein, particularly in the light of the fact that the country's citizens living abroad did not themselves enjoy such a possibility. It was true that there were not many women at the head of large enterprises in the country, but increasing numbers of women were setting up their own small businesses.

58. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** wondered whether, in view of the negative response of male voters to women candidates, the aims of the "two-thirds resolution" might not be suitably achieved by direct appointment by the State, which bore responsibility under the

Convention for women's increased participation in politics. While article 4.1 did not itself create an obligation, the requirement in article 7 that States parties take all appropriate measures could be interpreted in support of such a notion.

59. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** expressed concern about the role played by Parliament in the appointment of judges and the resulting danger of gender bias. Clarification would be welcome, particularly with regard to the application and selection of candidates. She asked whether the three political parties received subventions from the State and suggested that, if so, such subventions might be subject to fulfilment of the requirements of the "two-thirds resolution".

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*