



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
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Summary record of the 525th meeting

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Chairperson: Ms. Regazzoli (Vice-Chairperson)

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Ms. Regazzoli, Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

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

Fourth and fifth periodic reports of Nicaragua (CEDAW/C/NIC/4; CEDAW/PSWG/2000/II/CRP.1/Add.3 and CRP.2/Add.1)

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

2. **Ms. Frech de Alemán** (Nicaragua) stressed the important role which the Convention could play in promoting the rights of Nicaraguan women. Although 31 per cent of heads of household in Nicaragua were women, implementation of the Convention was being hindered by resistance to change which was rooted in traditional attitudes towards women, who were viewed as subservient to men. The difficult economic situation was also a constraint: Nicaragua was one of the poorest countries in Latin America. The unemployment rate had been 41.6 per cent in 1996 and per capita GDP was under \$500. In 1998, nearly 40 per cent of the population had been living in poverty, including 17.3 per cent in extreme poverty. To tackle that situation, the Government had developed a poverty reduction strategy with targets for 2005, along with targets for 2015 for reducing chronic malnutrition in children under 5 and reducing illiteracy. That strategy focused on women and children and was aimed at improving their education, health and their access to the related public services. Although in that context the achievement of gender equality remained a challenge, there was a consensus on the need to address women's issues and a frank dialogue was going on between civil society and the competent institution in that area.

3. Some progress had been made. In addition to the Constitution and the Act on Protection of Rights, competent bodies and authorities existed to which individuals could make complaints of human rights violations. Non-governmental organizations, such as the Nicaraguan Standing Committee on Human Rights, a civic organization founded in 1977, and the Nicaraguan Centre for Human Rights, a humanitarian organization created in 1990, the Executive Director of which was a woman, also played a major role. Progress

had been made in the area of legislation to protect the civil, political, social and economic rights of women. Effective implementation nevertheless remained difficult and ignorance of the law on the part of women, cumbersome implementation procedures, delays in processing claims for child support, etc. further exacerbated the situation. The draft penal, criminal procedure and family codes and the equal opportunity act, currently under study, would provide a legal framework for the promotion of women's rights and to eliminate provisions which discriminated against women.

4. Children's rights to nationality were described in the report (CEDAW/C/NIC/4, pp. 50-51). Nicaraguan nationality could be lost only in cases where an individual voluntarily adopted another nationality. Marriage and common law arrangements were recognized by the State and could be dissolved by either party or by mutual agreement.

5. Institutions created to strengthen women's role in society included the Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM), a government body responsible for the development of appropriate policies and effective strategies, and the Ministry for the Family, which emphasized assistance to at-risk families, children and adolescents. Government ministries were also mainstreaming a gender perspective in their social, population, citizen participation and sex education policies. The Nicaraguan Institute for Women had initiated the formulation of an equal opportunity policy, a process which would culminate in early 2002. Inter-institutional commissions, which provided a link between the State and civil society, had been strengthened and a number of consultative bodies had been created. Non-governmental organizations, such as the Women's Anti-Violence Network and the umbrella group of non-governmental organizations working with children and adolescents, also played an important role. In addition, as part of the democratization process, in June 1999 a Prosecutor and Deputy Prosecutor for Human Rights had been appointed, as well as special prosecutors for children, adolescents and women.

6. Since 1990, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport had been trying to increase women's participation through education, and progress, although slow, had been significant (CEDAW/C/NIC/5, pp. 79-92). Steps taken to expand the coverage of the school system nationwide, particularly at the pre-school and primary levels and in rural areas, focusing on girls, had

resulted in higher retention and success rates. In fact, more women and girls were enrolled in education than their male counterparts. School attendance had increased in all areas, but was higher in urban areas.

7. The illiteracy rate was 11.5 per cent in urban areas and 33.1 per cent in rural areas, and women's literacy rate was slightly higher than men's. The literacy curriculum had been revised, new materials had been developed and municipal teachers and technicians had been trained. The Adult Education Department provided educational opportunities to working youth and adults, giving priority to single mothers, housewives, and working women and women heads of household; women currently made up 48.3 per cent of adult students. Women also had higher performance, retention and graduation rates.

8. A national education plan had been drawn up for 2001-2015 and the National Technological Apprenticeship Institute (INATEC) had created an office for women's training to develop gender-specific vocational training in priority areas where there were the largest numbers of unemployed women, peasant women, single mothers, women prisoners and adolescents at risk. It provided credit and training in non-traditional occupations to encourage women to create their own micro-enterprises.

9. Slightly more than half of all university students were women, and progressively more women were taking courses studying areas traditionally dominated by men. Gender studies had been added to the university curriculum to increase awareness of women's issues and encourage students to carry out research on that topic. Discussions and seminars on breastfeeding were also being organized for male teachers, students and university employees.

10. Progress had been made in the areas of women's health and life expectancy (CEDAW/C/NIC/5, pp. 61-62). However, maternal mortality, which had increased from 98 to 106 per 100,000 live births between 1993 and 1998, remained a major public health problem. Cervical and breast cancer were also responsible for many deaths. Health services were being reorganized to provide greater coverage and incorporate family planning and a gender perspective. Immunization campaigns and the promotion of breastfeeding, as well as better care during pregnancy and in child birth, had reduced infant mortality rates from 58.2 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 40 per 1,000 in 1998. Success in

combating diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections and immuno-preventable diseases, as well as general improvements in health care, had reduced child mortality rates. The Ministry of Health had made comprehensive health care for women and children a priority.

11. Recalling that Nicaragua had one of the highest fertility rates in Latin America, she noted that the 1996 Labour Code prohibited discrimination against women and provided protection for pregnant women and nursing mothers. Women still tended to have low-paying jobs, however, and men's wages were often three times those of women. The situation of rural women was described in the fifth periodic report (pp. 63-66). In 1997, an Inter-institutional Committee for Women and Rural Development had been created to coordinate governmental and non-governmental initiatives in that area. The Committee had developed an equal opportunity policy and a plan of action for rural women. With regard to women's access to credit (CEDAW/NIC/5, pp. 62-63), the Nicaraguan Institute for Women had developed a Women and Credit project to assist women in running small businesses and agricultural activities, setting up 12 community development banks in 14 of the country's 17 departments.

12. Turning to the problem of domestic violence (CEDAW/C/NIC/5, pp. 30-38), which was very prevalent, she noted that a National Plan for the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2001-2006 had been adopted. It had five components: detection, prevention, care, punishment and institution-building and comprised 21 intersectoral projects. The Penal Code provisions on domestic violence had been amended and further amendments were envisaged to better define domestic violence and enhance victims' ability to obtain redress before the courts. The Nicaraguan Institute for Women was also involved in raising awareness of the problem of domestic violence and changing societal attitudes.

13. The Nicaraguan Institute for Women had made training an important part of its efforts to strengthen programmes for the advancement of women, in which external cooperation had been an important source of economic, financial and technical assistance. Its efforts had included training for women political leaders and training of outreach workers for leadership workshops on violence, the implementation of laws on women and children, alternative credit and a gender perspective.

Teachers and adolescents were being taught about the provisions of the Convention in order to increase awareness of it, and the National Police was working to make gender awareness a part of its institutional culture (CEDAW/C/NIC/5, p. 38).

14. With regard to the sexual exploitation of women and girls (CEDAW/C/NIC/5, pp. 40-42), various organizations provided support in the form of primary education, technical training and sexual and reproductive health information to women who had been exploited sexually, and helped them avoid future exploitation and its detrimental effects on their health. The Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations were working with those organizations to provide information and education on sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. Article 40 of the Constitution expressly prohibited trafficking in persons in all its forms and Act No. 150 on sex crimes defined that crime and set out the corresponding penalties.

15. Women had been a strong presence in political life in the 1990s. In 1995, the President, the provisional Vice-President and the heads of the National Assembly and the Supreme Electoral Council had been women. The majority of women employed in the civil service were in the lower echelons; however, women's representation in the Supreme Court had increased. In 1996, women belonging to 10 political parties and representing various ideologies and religions had formed the National Women's Coalition. The Minimum Agenda developed by the coalition had attracted national visibility and media coverage to a debate which had thus far been confined to isolated groups of women. At a rally that same year, women candidates signatories of the Minimum Agenda, had pledged to defend the consensus achieved in the National Coalition, regardless of their ideological and political differences. Other political forums for women included the Nicaraguan Women's Forum, an outgrowth of the gender and leadership workshops organized by the Nicaraguan Institute for Women; the Women's Forum for a New Nation, bringing together women from diverse political ideologies, parties and social sectors; and the Association of Women Mayors and Deputy Mayors, which had organized practical workshops on methodology.

16. The fifth periodic report contained statistics on women's participation in foreign affairs (p. 50) and in elections and affairs of state (pp. 43-45). In the 1996 elections, more than 24 per cent of candidates for

Parliament had been women, of whom 17 per cent had been elected. Women had accounted for 51 per cent of registered voters in those elections. Women in the executive branch held mainly middle-ranking posts. The fifth periodic report gave data on the presence of women in a number of government ministries during the period 1993-1995 (pp. 44-45). Currently, six women occupied the executive top post in ministries and autonomous entities, and four were second in command.

17. The fifth periodic report gave information on women's presence in the armed forces and the national police, whose modernization process had included the establishment of the National Police Gender Advisory Council in 1996, composed of 35 women and 4 men (p. 45), and on the percentage of women in the judiciary, including the Supreme Court, the Procurator-General's Office and the appeals courts (pp. 47-48). She noted that women accounted for 20 per cent of the members of the electoral authority and that the current President of the Supreme Electoral Council was a woman. She drew attention to some of the statistics given in the fifth periodic report on women's participation in municipal government as mayors, deputy mayors and town councillors (p. 48).

18. Women accounted for 50.4 per cent of the total population of Nicaragua, with 74.8 per cent of them living in poverty. Economic deprivation remained one of the chief obstacles to the achievement of full equality and equity between the sexes and also diminished women's capacity to participate as economic agents of national development. The Convention was the most vital international instrument for measuring the country's progress and limitations in the area of women's rights. While the Constitution and laws guaranteed women's civil, economic, political and social rights, the implementing mechanisms were inadequate. The women deputies in the Standing Commission on Women, Children, Youth and the Family were committed to developing legislation based on the real needs of the various sectors to which women belonged. However, de facto discrimination persisted as a result of deeply ingrained social values which encouraged gender segregation. In conclusion, additional financial resources were a prerequisite for the full implementation of national programmes and projects for the advancement of women.

19. **The Chairperson** acknowledged the difficulties of promoting the advancement of women in a country

recovering from war and devastated by Hurricane Mitch. She wondered whether the Convention could be successfully disseminated when the illiteracy rate was so high, particularly among rural women. Citing the outstanding record of the Latin American region in ratifying the Convention, she enquired whether the State party intended to ratify the Optional Protocol. It would be useful to have information on specific measures planned for election year with a view to increasing women's presence in decision-making posts. Lastly, the State party should furnish gender-disaggregated statistics to the Committee.

20. **Ms. Ferrer Gómez** agreed that having to recover from war and from the devastation of Hurricane Mitch had seriously aggravated the problem of poverty in Nicaragua, which in turn, affected implementation of the Convention. She would appreciate additional information on the range of programmes in the Government's poverty reduction campaign and, in particular, on how they would benefit women, for example, by generating jobs or narrowing the threefold difference between men's and women's wages. Noting that women were having to devise survival strategies (CEDAW/C/NIC/5, p. 61) in the free-market economy, she enquired about measures to protect women in the informal sector, where their rights were frequently violated. If possible, she would appreciate statistics on the percentage of women working either in the informal sector or on a part-time basis. It would also be useful to have information on conditions in the *maquila* industry, where women's employment was now concentrated. The State party should explain the underlying reasons for the large-scale migration of young girls and adolescents, whom she feared might be victims of the traffic in young girls and propose solutions.

21. She would be grateful for additional information on the situation of women in the indigenous communities in the Departments of Masaya, Granada and León, where ancient customs and traditions were deeply entrenched, and on any Government programmes to improve the economic and social situation of those women in their communities. She would also appreciate the State party's assessment as to what future actions needed to be taken to eliminate sexual stereotypes and what role the mass media should play in that connection.

22. **Ms. Manalo** said that she would be grateful for statistics on young women's enrolment in courses of

study traditionally dominated by men. An explanation of the informal and distance education programme and the extent to which information technology had helped to advance the education of young girls and women would also be interesting.

23. In the area of health, she enquired about the availability of mental health programmes to help women deal with the emotional trauma of natural disaster, civil strife and extreme poverty. She also wondered whether the general upsurge in the incidence of tuberculosis and malaria in poor tropical countries had affected Nicaragua, and, if so, whether there were any special programmes to deal with it. She would appreciate details on the role of national or international non-governmental organizations in the preparation of the State party's reports and the implementation of gender equality programmes. She would also be grateful for clarification of the relationship between non-governmental organizations and the Nicaraguan Institute for Women (INIM) and of the Institute's status — e.g., governmental or non-governmental.

24. With regard to violence against women, she wished to know about the Government's policy concerning emigration and any steps being taken to curtail trafficking in women who left the country. She noted that the report gave no legal definition of rape or description of programmes on dealing with it. She wished to know how the State party defined prostitution and who was punishable under its laws. Lastly, she enquired about specific information and education programmes to eliminate sex role stereotyping.

25. **Ms. González** expressed concern at the heavy reliance of INIM, one of Latin America's oldest national institutes for women, on international cooperation and aid, and wondered what would become of it should that source of financing be diminished or withdrawn. Serious curtailment of the Institute's programmes could affect the State party's ability to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. She strongly recommended allocating sufficient budgetary resources on a regular basis, to ensure that the Institute maintained its autonomy.

26. Recalling Nicaragua's outstanding role in the elaboration of the Inter-American Convention on the

Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, she enquired about recent national action to combat violence against women and available resources for programmes conducted by the Institute or by, inter alia, government ministries, the judiciary or the police to that end.

27. Referring to question 27 of the list of issues and questions, she requested information on the number of women assisted and the number of community outreach workers, midwives and community leaders trained under the Ministry of Health policy on violence as a public health issue.

28. She would also like to see — if necessary, in the next periodic report — more specific data on the impact of the increase in prostitution in Nicaragua, particularly among children and adolescents, and its relationship to trafficking in women and children. An indication should be given of the specific measures being taken or contemplated to address the situation. In conclusion, she hoped that Nicaragua would redouble its efforts to overcome gender stereotypes, which seriously impeded implementation of the Convention.

29. **Ms. Shin** said that she would like to see the figures for the total national budget, in order to obtain a better idea of how much was being spent on women and women's issues. Also, statistics should in future be disaggregated by sex.

30. It appeared that the Nicaraguan Institute for Women was indeed the national machinery for implementing policy and programmes for women. She enquired whether the Executive Director of the Institute believed that she had enough power to influence the various Ministries involved to implement gender mainstreaming, the most important part of the Beijing Platform for Action. Did she feel that they were showing enough sympathy and providing enough funding for women's issues?

31. She noted that the Catholic Church had enormous influence in Nicaragua, with some 73 per cent of the population, according to her information, describing themselves as Catholic. She enquired about the state of relations between the Nicaraguan Institute for Women and Church leaders, as there was no mention in the report of contacts between them. Church leaders were opinion-makers and could help combat violence and stereotyping, and she wondered whether there had been any improvements in their attitudes towards abortion and women's reproductive rights.

32. She noted that no information had been provided on the incidence of prostitution and/or trafficking in women, other than a mention that the Penal Code contained sanctions against procurers and traffickers. She recalled that the Sandinista Government was reputed to have brought former prostitutes into the police force; she wondered what had happened to them since. Information on prostitution should, in future, include a breakdown by age; according to her sources, there were many child prostitutes in Nicaragua, which was understandable given the prevalence of poverty and the demographic structure of the country, with almost half the population being under the age of 15 years.

33. **Ms. Frech de Alemán** (Nicaragua) said that she would consult with her delegation to prepare the best possible responses to the questions and issues that had been raised and would give them to the Committee at its next meeting.

34. She observed that Nicaragua had signed both the Convention and its Optional Protocol and viewed them as binding and as a suitable legal framework for amending Nicaragua's legislation in order to achieve equality between men and women. Courses and meetings on the Convention and the Optional Protocol were organized at the governmental and other levels, aimed at informing leaders and the public and raising awareness of what the Convention and the Protocol really meant both in legal terms and for people in their everyday lives. Both the Convention and the Optional Protocol were being studied with a view to giving them constitutional rank.

35. **Ms. Goonesekere** said that she was impressed by the degree of commitment of the Government of Nicaragua to putting in place legislation, policies and programmes to address the problem of gender discrimination, particularly in the light of the turmoil and disasters that had afflicted the country. Nicaragua had already put in place many of the laws, policies and programmes that the Committee often requested countries to consider adopting.

36. She asked for an explanation of the puzzling contradiction between the laudably high figures for women's life expectancy and participation in higher education and their high maternal mortality and fertility rates. There was a similar puzzling contradiction between those positive indicators and the prevalence of entrenched machismo. She suggested

that the Institute should address those contradictions, in the first place by studying them; some of the large number of women at university could perhaps be commissioned to do so.

37. She noted that a law had been passed appointing a special prosecutor for women. She asked whether the special prosecutor was already working, whether he or she had received any complaints and, if so, what was being done about them. She requested specific information about how well human rights training programmes were working and in what areas.

38. **Ms. Corti** expanded on the previous speaker's point about the apparent contradictions in the statistics on women and asked about the underlying reason for them. It was hard for her to understand the relationship between Church and State in Nicaragua as it had been described: was Nicaragua a secular State or not? She noted that machismo had been identified as the main obstacle to progressive social policy and enquired where that machismo came from and who was responsible for its persistence, given that many Nicaraguan women were well educated and the relevant international law had been incorporated into domestic law. There was also a contradiction between Nicaragua's progressive record on domestic violence and the prevalence of machismo. Also, she considered that Nicaragua's legislation and policy on domestic violence placed too much emphasis on adolescent and child victims and not enough on women. In that connection, she enquired to whom the women's and children's units in the various Ministries reported and from what part of the State hierarchy they were financed.

39. She noted that the "right to life" was enshrined in the Constitution and enquired whether the Constitution stipulated at what moment life was deemed to begin. "Family patrimony" was a concept that had been described as benefiting women with children. She asked for further explanation of the concept and what it meant for women. The Convention on the Rights of the Child had been elevated to Constitutional rank. She asked why the Convention had not been so elevated and what actions were being taken to do so.

40. From the budget figures that had been provided, it was not clear whether sufficient funding had been allocated for the operation of governmental bodies dealing with women-related issues, including the family courts. In that regard, she enquired what stage

had been reached in the reform of those courts and whether the civil courts based their judgements on paternal power or whether that system too had been reformed.

41. She enquired whether there were statistics on abortion — which had recently been banned in Nicaragua — to indicate that the number of abortions had decreased as a result of the new legislation or that abortion had been eliminated. Given that the aim of the legislation was to abolish the practice of abortion entirely, she enquired also whether any research was being conducted into back-street abortions, including who was performing them and who was undergoing them.

42. She noted that sex education in schools had been made mandatory in 1997, and particularly that young women and adolescents were being encouraged to "exercise their sexuality in a responsible manner" (*"asumir su sexualidad de forma responsable"*). She wondered what was the meaning of that phrase and what was the content of the sex education provided in schools.

43. Concerning women's participation in political life, it seemed to her that progress had been made in that area after the civil war, but that since then there had been a retrogression. She asked for an explanation of that phenomenon.

44. One of the most important areas of concern was health care. In that connection, the programme and plan of action which had been described sounded wonderful, but she wondered how all their goals were to be financed. The Committee would appreciate information concerning how the necessary funding was being budgeted.

45. **Ms. Gaspard** said that while Nicaragua's reports, particularly the fifth report, contained some figures, they were hard to interpret because there were no statistical tables on women, whether in relation to decision-making, education, violence or health. Nicaragua had an Institute for Statistics and Censuses, and she wondered whether statistics were systematically disaggregated by sex. Without disaggregated figures, it was impossible to measure the comparative status of women and men, analyse patterns of discrimination and devise remedial measures.

46. Concerning the draft Family Code, she wished to know whether its provisions had been drawn up in cooperation with women's non-governmental organizations and how soon it would be ready for review.

47. On the issue of the emigration of adolescent girls, she enquired whether the reasons for emigration were known and what became of the girls.

48. In the area of employment, affirmative action measures were reportedly being considered. She wished to know whether they would apply to the private as well as the public sector and, if so, what enforcement measures were envisaged. She asked how the wages of women working in free-trade zones compared with those of women working elsewhere and with those of men. Were there any regulations governing wives who worked without remuneration in their husband's shops or on their farms?

49. The fact that 31 per cent of heads of household in Nicaragua were women implied that many women, whether divorced or abandoned, were left with children to raise. She asked what the regulations were concerning alimony and child support owed by absent fathers and whether they were being applied.

50. On the subject of HIV/AIDS, she wished to know whether pregnant women were offered HIV testing.

51. **Ms. Achmad** echoed the concern at the disparity between Nicaraguan women's educational achievements and their unduly low health status. She also joined previous speakers in urging that Nicaragua raise the Convention to constitutional rank, as it had done with the Convention on the Rights of the Child; priority for children should not preclude that for women.

52. She was deeply concerned at the absence of a general education act. Education was a major means of inculcating equality and achieving the objectives of the Convention. Through it, the Government could eliminate sexual stereotypes and gain men's acceptance of day-to-day equality with women, whether in the family, the workplace or in politics. In drafting a general education act and finalizing the Family Code, Nicaragua would do well to draw on the Convention, which detailed the various educational components required.

53. **Ms. Hazelle** said that coming from a small nation that had had its share of natural disasters, she could

sympathize with the challenge of rebuilding Nicaragua. Her country also had a high proportion of female heads of household. In that connection, she asked what facilities were available to help women reconcile their family and work responsibilities, such as day-care centres and after-school programmes for children. She would like to know whether such programmes were available for women working in the free-trade zones, and whether cooperation to that end had been initiated with the Ministry of Labour.

54. On the subject of violence against women, she requested details of the penalties in force, statistics on prosecution and conviction, clarification of the relationship of the National Commission on Violence against Women, Children and Young Persons to the existing legal framework, further information about the support available to families and details of the training of police officers, especially in dealing with domestic disputes. It would be helpful to know what kinds of actions within the family were not regarded as domestic abuse.

55. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling** observed that the Committee was finding it difficult to gauge the actual impact of Nicaragua's programmes and structures, which was why its members were asking so many questions. It would be helpful if Nicaragua's next report were more concrete and contained additional statistics. She asked whether there was a timetable for the amendment of the discriminatory laws still in force, as called for in article 2 of the Convention. She would also like to know whether the proposed equal opportunity act would be enacted before the next elections and, if not, what its chances of reintroduction would be.

56. **Ms. Livingstone Raday** joined other speakers in congratulating Nicaragua on the progress made despite its difficult circumstances. She was deeply concerned about the emotional and educational repercussions for young girls aged 14 to 17 years in rural areas who reportedly had relationships with older men, who often were themselves fathers. She asked whether measures were being taken to address the problem, including prosecution of the men for sexual corruption of minors or statutory rape. Was such conduct being discouraged as part of Nicaragua's sex education programme?

57. Noting that female-specific mortality was the most common cause of death among women, she enquired about efforts to provide cancer screening and

improve maternity care. She asked whether data existed on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the population, whether prevention programmes were in operation and whether condoms were freely available, especially to vulnerable populations. She also asked whether the Catholic Church opposed such programmes.

58. She wished to know whether the equal opportunity act would apply only to public sector employment or would extend to employees in the private sector. Lastly, she had been surprised to read the very broad finding of the Supreme Court of Justice that no discrimination against women existed in Nicaragua's laws. What case had prompted that finding, who had brought it, and on what basis had the finding been made?

59. **Mr. Melander** noted that there was an apparent discrepancy in the fifth periodic report: on page 68 it stated that major progress had been achieved in substantive law for the protection of women, although that had not been accompanied by changes in procedural law, whereas on page 69 it stated that most Nicaraguan laws did not take women's rights into account. He requested clarification of that discrepancy. He understood that female students outnumbered male students in higher education; he would like to know the relative proportions of men and women on the teaching staff of Nicaraguan universities. Lastly, he asked whether Nicaragua would accede to the amendment to article 20 of the Convention.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.