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Summary record of the 37th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 6 November 2009, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Marchán Romero

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

Consideration of reports:

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

Fifth periodic report of Poland (E/C.12/POL/5; E/C.12/POL/Q/5 and Add.1; E/C.12/1/Add.82; HRI/CORE/POL/2009)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Poland took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Mieczko** (Poland) said that, during the period covered by the fifth periodic report (E/C.12.POL/5), Poland had joined the European Union (EU). It had recently celebrated its fifth anniversary of EU membership, which had a positive impact on all aspects of Polish life, especially in enhancing the realization of its citizens' economic, social, and cultural rights.
3. After coming to office in 2007, his Government had launched a four-pillar programme. The first pillar aimed to build prosperity by accelerating growth in gross domestic product (GDP) through higher employment, macroeconomic stability, the adoption of the euro, reduction of the budget deficit, enhanced productivity, improved transport infrastructure and Internet accessibility, increased investment and modernization of Poland's education and research sectors. The second pillar focused on development with a view to boosting entrepreneurship, reducing taxes and releasing the growth potential of the various regions of Poland. The third pillar addressed security, helping young people to enter the labour market and developing effective social security and health care systems. It also aimed to assist Poland in achieving greater energy security, developing a "green" economy and establishing effective safeguards against crises and other emergencies. The fourth pillar involved efforts to enhance citizen participation in public life and increase trust in public institutions, the role of NGOs in public life and State efficiency.
4. In the social sector, the main goal was to improve the quality of life in Poland by increasing employment, particularly among women, parents, the elderly and persons with disabilities. A programme of measures had been adopted to stimulate employment among persons aged over 50.
5. Regarding family policy, the Government was endeavouring to improve the financial situation of families and to reverse low birth rates. The "family package" Act had been introduced to make it easier to balance a career with family life. The package provided for longer statutory maternity leave; additional discretionary maternity leave from 2010; paternity leave from 2010; the option to combine additional maternity leave with work; gradually increasing the basis for calculating the social insurance contribution of people on childcare leave; and bringing the rights of adoptive parents into line with those of biological parents. The Act also amended regulations to ensure businesses provided employee childcare services, that a wide range of childcare services was available and that childcare centres met new minimum standards.
6. Significant changes to improve the care system for children removed from parental care were being made, such as offering family-based foster care as well as care in children's homes and the appointment of more social workers to implement preventive measures and work with families at risk.
7. Combating violence in the family was also a Government priority, and Poland participated actively in campaigns led by the United Nations and the Council of Europe against violence towards women and domestic violence.

8. As for equal treatment and non-discrimination, appropriate legislation had been introduced and was to be supplemented by a bill implementing EU legislation on equal treatment in such areas as education, employment, social security, health care, and access to public services. In addition, an act had been promulgated on 6 January 2005 for protecting national and ethnic minorities and regional languages.

9. The education system had been reformed to adjust school curricula to the needs of the labour market and ensure equal access to the education system. Curricula now focused on developing key skills in foreign languages, the sciences, information technology, social interaction, the creative arts and entrepreneurship. Particular attention was being paid to children from underprivileged backgrounds and those with special educational needs and disabilities. In addition, kindergarten facilities were being expanded, especially in rural areas.

10. With respect to health care reforms, in April 2009 the Government had adopted a three-year programme of support to local authorities to stabilize the health-care system and tackle the chronic debt problem. Hospitals were being given the option of becoming privatized in exchange for repayment of their debts, enabling them to offer private medical services as well as free national health care.

11. Contrary to the situation in many other countries, Poland's economy had not slipped into recession, but its GDP growth rate had slowed down due to the global economic crisis. To tackle economic slowdown, the Government had adopted a plan to ensure stability of public finances, create conditions for further economic growth by encouraging higher consumer spending and business investment, improve flexibility in the labour market and encourage workforce retention. New employment subsidies had been introduced to stave off mass redundancies, and new regulations obliged employers to offer assistance to unemployed workers, in addition to government aid already in place, such as help with mortgage payments.

12. Nonetheless, the current global crisis would continue to have an impact on Poland in 2010 and significant growth in social spending would be unlikely, with the consequence that the enjoyment of certain social rights might be curtailed. However, the Government was still committed to fulfilling its obligations under article 2 of the Covenant to ensure that the Polish people progressively enjoyed the full realization of their rights.

13. **Mr. Pillay** asked what steps the Polish Government was taking to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in the workplace. According to reports, the Ombudsman was doing little to prevent such discrimination, so much so that NGOs in Poland had refused to cooperate with the Ombudsman and the issue had also been raised by the European Committee of Social Rights.

14. He also asked what the State party was doing to address the persistent problem of discrimination against the Roma people. There was little evidence of action having been taken to tackle the problem since the Committee's recommendation in its 2002 concluding observations (E/C.12/1/Add.82) that Poland should adopt a comprehensive programme to address the various forms of discrimination faced by the Roma community.

15. **Ms. Brás Gomes** asked for clarification on the involvement of civil society organizations in implementing the Committee's concluding observations. She was concerned to note from the State party's replies to the list of issues (E/C.12/POL/Q/5/Add.1, para. 59) that civil society organizations had not been involved in the preparation of the fifth periodic report, despite the Committee's recommendations to that effect in 2002. Did the State party intend to disseminate the Committee's forthcoming concluding observations widely to civil society organizations?

16. Referring to non-discrimination, she asked if the State party intended to make provision in its domestic legislation for the express grounds for discrimination outlined in the Committee's recently published general comment No. 20. She requested clarification on the statement in paragraph 79 of the State party's replies to the list of issues that the Covenant did not impose the obligation to ban discrimination in all spheres of life. Which spheres of life did the Covenant omit? She also asked for further information on Poland's legislation in implementation of EU regulations on equal treatment. Which EU regulations on equal treatment were being left out, and why?

17. She associated herself with Mr. Pillay's remarks on the issue of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and asked for further information on the status of the State party's draft legislation in that respect and the action being taken to ensure that the concerns expressed by the relevant organizations were taken into consideration.

18. **Ms. Bonoan-Dandan** said that the head of delegation had mentioned the Government's four-pillar programme in his statement but the programme appeared to make no reference to human rights, in particular to economic, social and cultural rights. She also observed that the policies of the new Government appeared to be more focused on economic matters than on economic rights. She had been disturbed by the delegation's view that making political choices as to the allocation of resources was necessary and setbacks in the enjoyment of social rights were unavoidable. She wished to know the place of those rights among the four pillars of Government policy and asked how the Government planned to increase the role of NGOs in public life. Moreover, she wondered how the State party intended to promote the Covenant when public access to the report appeared to be difficult, emphasizing that one of the purposes of the reporting process was to disseminate the Covenant widely in order to generate public debate.

19. She asked the State party to clarify its reply regarding training for public officials on the provisions of the Covenant and their application, from which it appeared that human rights could be restricted under certain circumstances, and to indicate what form such restrictions might take. She also asked how widespread hate crimes were and what forms they took, in view of the Government's preparations for a vocational training programme against such crimes. In its replies, the State party had listed training courses available to judges and members of the Bar Council. However, more detailed information regarding the content of those courses would be useful, as they appeared to focus on labour and social security laws, as distinct from labour and social security rights. Lastly, she asked what the results of the National Programme against Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance had been, as well as the challenges that it had encountered.

20. **Mr. Riedel** said that the sizeable delegation was a clear sign that Poland was taking its obligations under the Covenant seriously.

21. Further to the point raised by Mr. Pillay, he reminded the State party that since the Committee had issued general comment No. 3 it had stated that core elements of the Covenant could be directly applied and that, if they were not, the State party was obliged to amend the law to ensure that they were directly applicable. The State party appeared to take the view that the provisions of the Covenant were non-self-executing and could not be invoked directly before the courts in the absence of a constitutional provision or specific statutes, when States parties were clearly obliged under the Covenant to ensure that its articles had the force of law.

22. He expressed the hope that Poland would be among the first States parties to ratify the Optional Protocol.

23. By all accounts, the Commissioner for the Protection of Civil Rights (Ombudsman) was a praiseworthy institution. However, access to the Ombudsman on sensitive issues such

as gay and lesbian rights seemed somewhat limited and such issues appeared not to receive sufficient public attention. It would be helpful for the Committee to know how many of the 35,000 cases investigated by the Ombudsman had related to economic, social and cultural rights.

24. **Ms. Barahona Riera** said that in its previous concluding observations on Poland (E/C.12/1/Add.82), the Committee had recommended that the bill on gender equality should be adopted. Although the State party had referred to a series of measures based on EU regulations on equal treatment in its replies, it would be helpful if it would indicate clearly why the gender equality bill had not been adopted.

25. The head of the delegation had indicated that resources would be allocated to meet priority needs in order to combat the economic crisis. The fact that there was no law on equal rights or non-discrimination meant that, when those resources were allocated, women would not be given priority with regard to equal work opportunities. She therefore wished to know specifically how the State party intended to protect equal rights for women in the context of the crisis.

26. She also asked the State party to clarify the functions of the Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment. It appeared that the Ministry of Labour dealt with most equal opportunity and non-discrimination issues relating to the family. Noting that the State party had a Commissioner for the Protection of Civil Rights (Ombudsman), she asked whether any such institution existed for the protection of economic, social and cultural rights. As NGOs had indicated that the issue of equal treatment would be dealt with by the Ombudsman, she requested further information on the Ombudsman's mandate.

27. **Mr. Sadi** said that the delegation of Poland was impressive and well-equipped to respond to health, labour and social security issues, although that was not the case in respect of other issues, such as housing and education. He asked the ministries concerned to reflect candidly on the extent to which they referred in their work to the Covenant, from a practical viewpoint.

28. With regard to the legal application of the Covenant, he noted that the State party had indicated in its written replies that the courts considered whether the provisions of international agreements were self-executing when they examined a particular case, provided that the international agreement in question had been invoked as a basis for the complaint. If that was the case across the board, the State party would benefit from ratifying the Optional Protocol, as doing so would facilitate the application of the Covenant.

29. The State party's list of courses and programmes for the training of judges was impressive. It would be useful to know the extent to which the Covenant was covered in those activities and whether the Committee's general comments were relevant to the application of the Covenant through the courts and to the training of judges and whether they were taken into consideration by the Ombudsman.

30. He asked the State party to clarify the distinction drawn between national and ethnic minorities in the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and the Regional Language and the criteria for the recognition of the four ethnic and nine national minorities recognized under that Act.

31. **Mr. Tirado Mejía** said that the Committee had welcomed the establishment of the Plenipotentiary for Equal Gender Status in its concluding observations in 2002. He requested more detailed information on the Plenipotentiary's functions, and tangible evidence of areas in which progress had been made and enquired whether expectations had been met. He also asked how the State dealt with discriminatory attitudes against women and whether there was a national action plan on equality of opportunity.

The meeting was suspended at 11.20 a.m. and resumed at 11.35 a.m.

32. **Ms. Maciejewska** (Poland) said that social partners and NGOs had not participated in the formulation of the fifth periodic report as the Government was responsible for its preparation; the same procedure was followed for other reports, such as reports under the European Social Charter. However, the report was a public document and the process of its preparation was also public. Anyone could request the report and the background documents from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy under the law on access to public information. In view of the scope and volume of the report, her country had decided to await requests for access to it but had received none from any organization. From mid-2010, the State party report and the Committee's concluding observations would be available on the Ministry's website, as would the latest report under the European Social Charter.

33. The Constitution of Poland provided that international treaties that had been ratified and published in the Official Journal formed part of the domestic legal system and were directly applicable, unless their application required the adoption of a law, which could be assessed by the courts. However, the ministries were primarily responsible for studying and evaluating how best to implement a given treaty. If they considered that a treaty was not directly applicable then they were under obligation to draft a law that would implement its provisions. The courts could also consider the direct applicability of the Covenant, in individual cases. Poland had referred to a Supreme Court decision on implementing the provisions of the Covenant and the possibility of invoking it as a source of subjective law. However, such case law was not abundant and the national courts preferred to base their decisions on the provisions of the Constitution. The Committee was familiar with the case law relating to the European Social Charter. The case law was more detailed with regard to the direct application of the Constitution. The principles governing the direct applicability of the Constitution could be applied to the implementation of the provisions of international treaties, including the Covenant.

34. With regard to ratification of the Optional Protocol, which Poland had played an active role in negotiating, she said the State party's position was that communications submitted at the international level would be groundless given the specific nature of State obligations under the Covenant. As had been reasonably pointed out by several States, the nature of international obligations with respect to civil and political rights on the one hand and economic, social and cultural rights on the other was different. Treaty provisions regarding civil and political rights could be invoked directly before national and international courts, whereas most provisions regarding social rights were by nature indicative and programmatic and had no direct effect on the domestic legal order. That aspect of social rights had been reflected in the Covenant, and meant that provisions pertaining to them could not be invoked in the courts. The case law of other countries demonstrated a similar viewpoint. However, the fact that the provisions of the Covenant had little evident effect on legislation did not mean that the Covenant had no legal effect, since the State did execute its obligations under the Covenant to the extent possible financially and the Constitutional Court often invoked the Covenant as well as the European Social Charter.

35. While acknowledging that no representative of the Ministry of Infrastructure was present, she pointed out that the rest of the delegation, which included a representative of the Ministry of Education, was prepared to give information in response to all of the Committee members' questions.

36. **Mr. Ciechański** (Poland), in response to questions about the place of economic, social and cultural rights, especially social rights, in the Government's social policy, stressed that social rights in many areas were guaranteed under the Constitution. Awareness of social rights was high both within the Government and among the general public, and

trade union organizations played an active role in monitoring respect for human rights in Government policies.

37. On the issue of ratifying international human rights instruments, he said that the policy of all Governments in Poland since 1989 had been to carefully examine each instrument to ensure that the State party would be in a position to implement fully all of its provisions. It was not a case of the Government not wanting to incorporate certain rights into national policy, but it would always ensure that it could meet its commitments rather than adopting the instrument and then doing little to implement it. Substantial financial investment was often involved, and although the State party was affluent in worldwide terms it remained one of the poorer countries in Europe. The State party always considered the comments of international supervisory bodies like the Committee very carefully; for example, Poland had followed the Committee's advice and amended the Civil Service Act to enable civil servants to take positions as officials in trade union organizations. In response to concerns expressed by Committee members that so much of the State party's introductory remarks had been dedicated to policies, he explained that it was exactly because a legal, programmatic and economic base was essential for ensuring real respect for human rights in practice that the delegation had focused on measures taken to build that base, in order to show that even during difficult times the Government was doing its utmost to implement the provisions of the Covenant, especially concerning social rights.

38. In response to a question regarding human rights education, he said that NGOs participated actively in formulating and enacting social policies. An act on public-good organizations provided for extensive funding for NGOs that wished to engage in the implementation of social policies, and a public-good council, comprising representatives of the Government and NGOs, assisted the Government in developing policies in conjunction with those that would later be responsible for practical implementation.

39. In response to questions about the functioning of the Commissioner for the Protection of Civil Rights (Ombudsman), while pointing out that he was not entitled to speak for the independent Ombudsman, he drew the Committee's attention to a statement that had recently been published on the Ombudsman's official website apologizing for comments which had appeared to suggest that he disliked feminists and stressing that that was no reflection on his attitude towards women's rights organizations, with which he had enjoyed much fruitful cooperation.

40. **Ms. Ksieniewicz** (Poland), in response to requests for further information regarding the latest results and effects of action taken to address the issue of inequality of rights between men and women and anti-discrimination legislation, and recalling that the Constitution contained provisions on equality of treatment, said that the Labour Code had been amended with regard to access to labour and social security and a chapter added that prohibited discrimination. An equal opportunities bill incorporated the provisions of several EU directives, and the European Commission's Roadmap for Equality between women and men for the period 2006–2010, which were binding, and aimed to combat and raise awareness about discrimination on all grounds, including gender, race and sexual orientation. A programme on gender diversity as an instrument of change aimed to raise the level of sensitivity among State officials regarding gender equality issues, and under another programme an advisory committee would work with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to make recommendations to increase dialogue between the Government and NGOs on the promotion of diversity.

41. **Ms. Bolesta-Borkowska** (Poland) said that the Labour Code contained a separate chapter covering the rights of employees to be treated equally and to receive equal pay for equal work, including equality of opportunity for employment between men and women. The Code included a ban on any form of discrimination on any grounds; it gave a list of possible grounds that was illustrative and not exclusive, including gender. Amendments had

been introduced to the Code in 2008 which included provisions to prohibit negative consequences for employees who took action to address harassment or bullying at work or to protect the rights of colleagues.

42. **Ms. Glowacka-Mazur** (Poland) said that the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and the Regional Language clearly defined and distinguished between national minorities and ethnic minorities, based on the practice of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe. National minorities, of which there were nine, comprised citizens whose ancestors were associated with the national majority in terms of culture, traditions, language and so on, and included persons of Czech, Lithuanian, German, Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian origin. Ethnic minorities, on the other hand, comprised communities whose culture differed from that of the national majority and who wished to pursue that culture, and included the Roma, Tartar and Lemko peoples. The difference between the national and ethnic minorities, therefore, related to their cultural roots.

43. In response to a question about the Roma minority, and recalling that, out of the national population of 40 million people, around 15,000 declared themselves to be Roma, she said the Government had undertaken a programme to improve the situation of the Roma over the period 2004–2013, which provided that a portion of the annual State budget must be allocated to Roma integration. Education and employment were covered, and local labour offices were working to provide vocational training and to create new jobs for Roma through measures such as subsidization of posts. Every year, 10 million zlotys were allocated to improving Roma housing. On the issue of official registration, she said that many Roma people had formerly lived in dangerously flood-prone areas, but that that serious problem had now been addressed. Under a scheme of the Ministry of Education, 60 gifted Roma students had been awarded grants that year, a number that was steadily rising. In order to ensure that the Roma people found their place within the employment structure, the plenipotentiary of the voivodship in which most members of the Roma ethnic minority lived was a woman of Roma origin. Under a school assistance programme, persons of Roma origin would go to schools to assist children and parents with any problems encountered in an effort to enhance the children's academic experience. The programme encouraged Roma communities to send their children to school, since it demonstrated the potential of an education for improving a child's future economic prospects.

44. A programme that had run from 2004–2009 had aimed to combat discrimination and xenophobia by shaping the attitudes of children through their education and providing training to police officers, border guards, prison officers and other public officials. Cases of offences involving racial hatred were being monitored continuously and, although statistics had not been successfully gathered, all possible action was being taken to address the issue. An NGO had won a call for tender by the Ministry of the Interior to suggest an appropriate methodology for collecting data on such offences, and should finish its work by the end of 2009. The first phase of a programme launched in cooperation with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to combat crimes based on racial hatred was due to be completed that day, and had involved training for police chiefs. The intention was to roll out the programme across the country in order to provide training for police officers and to increase awareness within the police of the problem of hate crimes.

45. **Ms. Milewska** (Poland) said that, as a result of recent amendments to educational regulations, school curricula had been expanded to include information on national and ethnic minorities in Poland, including their history, culture and traditions as well as their inherent rights. Following an ordinance from the Ministry of Education on the curricula, human rights were being reflected in history and society classes at elementary level and in history and civic education classes at post-elementary level, with the aim of encouraging respect for other cultures and their human rights and preventing racial discrimination.

Consultants had been employed to train teachers in disseminating information on human rights and preventing all forms of discrimination. Several books had been published for teachers and students on the teaching of human rights, including a Polish version of a Council of Europe publication which included theoretical guidelines and practical tips.

46. **Ms. Górczyńska** (Poland) said that judges and prosecutors were trained in human rights issues, and a prosecutor specializing in racial discrimination cases had recently been appointed to the National Prosecutor's Office. Paragraph 42 of the written replies to the Committee's list of issues listed the general topics for social and economic rights training for judges and prosecutors. The training involved detailed discussion of issues such as the definition of discrimination, employees' rights, and rights connected with combating harassment in the workplace, among others. During training sessions participants were required to engage in role-playing on discrimination in the workplace, in order to raise their awareness of the difficulties faced by victims and ensure that they dealt with discrimination cases appropriately. A number of such sessions had been held in 2008 and further sessions would be held in future.

47. **The Chairperson** said that the Committee did not share the view that the applicability of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights differed from that of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. All the provisions of the former were legally binding, since it was an international treaty. While the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provided for the possibility of the progressive achievement of the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights, all Covenant rights were subject to an immediate minimum level of implementation. The fact that the Optional Protocol to the Covenant, which would enable victims of violations to submit complaints to the Committee, had recently been adopted by consensus demonstrated the importance that the international community attached to State party obligations under the Covenant.

48. **The Chairperson** invited members of the Committee to ask questions relating to the implementation of articles 6–9 of the Covenant.

49. **Mr. Sadi** said that while the State party was making efforts to regularize the status of migrant workers, distinctions seemed to be made between different categories of such workers, and preferential treatment appeared to be given to Poles who had been living in the former Soviet Union. He asked whether Poland was considering ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

50. **Mr. Texier**, noting that unemployment rates in Poland remained high, enquired what specific measures were being taken to address the situation of particular categories of unemployed, such as women, young people, persons with disabilities and the long-term unemployed. Despite amendments to legislation, differences in wages and career prospects for women and men remained high. He asked what was being done to redress those imbalances, and said he wondered whether equal pay for work of equal value would be more easily achieved if it was included as a provision in the Labour Code. Unemployment levels among Roma remained particularly high, and he asked how the State party intended to rectify that situation. Working hours in Poland were known to be extremely long, in some cases up to 16 hours per day, which contravened International Labour Organization regulations. He asked what was the maximum number of normal working hours per week, and how overtime hours were calculated and paid. In paragraph 20 of its 2002 concluding observations, the Committee had expressed concern that the minimum wage in Poland was insufficient to provide a worker and his or her family with a decent standard of living. He asked whether measures had been taken to address that problem. He also wondered whether sufficient funds were dedicated to labour inspection. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) had announced that collective agreements had been suspended in

Poland, and that employers were taking advantage of that situation to renegotiate new agreements that were less favourable for workers. He asked whether that was indeed the case and, if so, what measures were being taken to protect workers' rights. He further asked whether there was any jurisprudence on the disciplinary dismissal of staff for union participation. ITUC had reported cases of harassment of trade union members, and he wondered whether there was any relevant case law, and whether the sanctions applied in those cases had been strong enough to act as a deterrent.

51. **Ms. Brás Gomes** asked whether the State party intended to update the 1998 Act on the Social Security System to include grounds other than gender, marital status and family status. She further enquired whether the current level of unemployment benefit was sufficient to ensure a reasonable standard of living, and whether higher benefits were given to the long-term unemployed, since their financial needs tended to increase the longer they remained out of work. The European Roma Rights Centre having identified discrimination in Roma access to social welfare assistance, she wondered whether there were any specific measures in place to resolve that problem in the context of the Programme for the Roma Community in Poland, which had been adopted in 2003. She also asked whether measures were being taken to ensure equal retirement pensions for women and men, since the age of retirement was 60 years and 65 years for women and men respectively, which in effect would result in lower pensions for women.

52. **Mr. Zhan Daode** commended the Polish Government's efforts to avoid a serious economic downturn in Poland in the context of the current international financial crisis. While the report mentioned measures taken to overcome the slow growth in employment, it did not state whether those measures had been successful. He wished to know why there had been an increase in police intervention in cases of domestic violence, and what measures were being taken to eliminate domestic violence.

53. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** asked whether the improvements to the tax system mentioned in paragraph 10 of the State party report were improvements in favour of employers or of workers, and whether the reduction of labour costs mentioned in paragraph 11 had been achieved without detriment to working conditions and pay. In order to improve the quality of human resources the State party had taken measures to establish an education system that complied with the needs of the labour market. He wondered whether efforts were being made to ensure those measures did not jeopardize the implementation of articles 13–15 of the Covenant. Paragraph 12 of the State party report stated that the Government's labour market policy had not been successful since it had been pursued in unfavourable economic conditions. He asked whether problems had been caused only by the economic conditions, or whether perhaps there had also been shortcomings in the formulation of the policy, with an undue focus on the supply side of the labour market.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.