



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

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**
Forty-sixth session

Summary record of the 930th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 15 July 2010, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Gabr

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

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

Combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of the Russian Federation (CEDAW/C/USR/7, CEDAW/C/USR/Q/7 and Add.1)

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

2. **Mr. Topilin** (Russian Federation) said that his country took the implementation of the Convention very seriously. It had already acted on the Committee's recommendations with regard to paying salary arrears, reducing poverty and increasing the real income of women. While the Ministry of Health and Social Development largely bore the responsibility for implementing the Convention and reporting on its implementation, the Russian Federation had employed a multi-ministerial approach to the preparation of the periodic reports and had also involved all three branches of the Government, the Federal Council, employers and labour unions.

3. Committee members' questions had proved a sound basis on which to prepare for the report. Much consideration had also been given to a number of shadow reports by Russian and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the implementation of the Convention.

4. During the reporting period (1999-2008), the Russian Federation had seen large-scale social and economic changes, particularly after the problems of the 1990s, and was now on a stronger footing. Not only had arrears on salaries been paid, but also those on monthly child benefits. Real income over the period had increased by approximately 10 per cent annually. GDP had almost doubled since 2000, and the level of poverty had dropped by over 15 per cent.

5. Unlike many other countries grappling with the effects of the global financial crisis, the Russian Federation would not be cutting commitments to social and economic development programmes, including those for women and families. Rather, it continued to increase social benefits supporting them, while promoting an active demographic policy. It had also introduced a pension reform, which had seen pensions

increase by 25 per cent in 2009 and provided for an increase of 40 per cent in 2010.

6. Gender equality remained at the centre of his Government's attention and was taken into account when outlining strategic blueprints for the development of the State. A committee had been established to work with the Government and social organizations on developing agreed approaches to combat gender equality problems. Additionally, on the initiative of President Medvedev, 2008 had been declared the Year of the Family, which had strengthened the role and status of the family and the position of women. Many events had also been carried out to that end on a regional level.

7. Russian legislation was now in line with the provisions of the Convention. A new Labour Code adopted in 2001 had strengthened and broadened support for pregnant women and women with children. The Criminal Code had been supplemented in 2003 with articles on trafficking and slave labour. A law protecting victims and witnesses of crimes had been introduced in 2005, while laws on social support for families had been supplemented in 2007. In 2008, child benefits were made available to all parents, including those who had not been previously employed.

8. His Government had also introduced in 2008 the Maternity Capital programme, which provided a one-off payment of around \$11,000 to mothers on the birth of a second and each subsequent child. In 2009, two draft frameworks aimed at protecting families and vulnerable population groups had been approved and allocated Government funding. In 2010, the Russian President had signed amendments to laws providing for State financial support for non-profit organizations in the health and social services sectors. A law was currently being drafted stipulating free legal support for the poor and the elderly.

9. The Russian Federation was investing in the social sphere with a view to creating a flourishing, stable society that maximized the potential of its people. To that end, it was seeking to reduce poverty to a level typical of developed countries, stabilize the demographic situation, improve the social environment and health of the country and meet global standards in the provision of education and health care. While the crisis had necessitated urgent economic measures, it would not prevent the Government from delivering on its social commitments.

10. Although there were no women-specific programmes, women's rights and interests were fully taken into account within the framework of nationwide social projects, the biggest of which were the blueprint for demographic policy until 2025 and the Children of Russia project for the period 2007-2010.

11. Economic independence for women was crucial in achieving gender equality. In that regard, the Russian Government shared the new approach of the International Labour Organization (ILO) enshrined in the provisions of the Global Jobs Pact on the role of women in the economic recovery.

12. Federal employment programmes, including those implemented during the period 2001-2007, had started to bear real fruit in 2009-2010. Efforts had been made to support employment among women, particularly in agricultural areas and through measures to help and subsidize people trying to start their own businesses. As these programmes had proved successful in the crisis period, discussions were under way to extend them.

13. During the reporting period, employment among women had increased at a higher rate than among men. Women had also tended to find work more quickly and had been more inclined to use job centres or enrol in professional training courses than men had.

14. Unemployment benefits, including training or subsidies for starting a business, were available to men and women on an equal basis. While employment had been an issue when the crisis began, employment among women had since returned to pre-crisis levels, and as women filled more stable positions in the economy, the level of unemployment among women was 1.1 per cent lower than it was among men.

15. His Government had recently approved measures, involving retraining and refresher courses, aimed at easing the transition for women returning from maternity leave and alleviating any risks involved. However, the Russian Federation believed that women should not be working in conditions that could be harmful to their general and reproductive health and, consequently, prohibited them from working in mines, at logging sites, with dangerous materials or in slaughterhouses.

16. Women's general and reproductive health needed to be protected in order to safeguard the country's future. As the Russian Federation had been suffering a

severe demographic crisis since the 1990s, it was natural that the Government had made every effort in order to break that trend. The health and well-being of mothers and their children would be the best foundation on which to build.

17. Although much had been done to establish a stable demographic situation, even more work lay ahead. Nevertheless, for the first time in 15 years, the trend had been broken and the population had increased. In 2009, 50,000 more babies had been born than in the previous year and the mortality rate had decreased by 3 per cent, whereas in 1998 the mortality rate had increased by 8 per cent and the birth rate had dropped by 5.3 per cent. In addition, the Russian authorities were implementing a project to expand the network of medical centres for women: 24 perinatal clinics designed to provide cutting-edge technology and highly qualified help for pregnant women and newborns suffering from particularly serious problems were currently under construction and the majority of them would be put online in 2010.

18. A 2-per-cent increase in the premium on compulsory medical insurance from 1 January 2011 would net an additional 500 billion roubles in resources to provide maternal support and create a healthier way of life. While infant and maternal mortality rates still lagged behind the developed-country level, the Russian Federation had seen decreases of around 50 per cent and 44 per cent respectively.

19. A crucial element of social development and stability was the involvement of women in the political life of the country. Russian legislation guaranteed women and men equal rights to employment in the central civil service and local authorities. In practice, women constituted over half of all civil servants and were in key jobs throughout the Government. There were three female heads of ministries, two female governors and many female deputy ministers. The representation of women was even higher on the regional level. Nevertheless, there was still untapped potential and more must be done.

20. His Government was committed to developing its own strategy to combat violence against women, and shared the Secretary-General's belief that all States should do the same. It supported the Secretary-General's global campaign "Unite to End Violence Against Women" and his initiative to form a network

of men leaders. On a national level, it stressed eradicating the causes of violence against women and preventing violence by establishing real gender equality. The matter was particularly pressing as the crisis had exacerbated such causes of violence against women, as poverty, unemployment, alcoholism, drug addiction and sexual exploitation. All regions and relevant social services were combating the problem in partnership with social organizations.

21. Health-care organizations had established procedures for locating and registering problem families with children, particularly those in which a child's life was under threat. Their details were then passed on to regional bodies protecting the rights of minors.

22. The number of reports of violence, including of a sexual nature, had been monitored on a yearly basis since 2005. Social organizations had played their part in providing support to victims of violence and had worked in close contact with the executive branch of the Government and local governments. Considerable attention, including on a federal level, had been paid to correcting behaviour and combating social ills.

Articles 1 to 6

23. **Ms. Jaising**, recalling that an earlier attempt to adopt equality legislation had been unsuccessful, asked for information on the current status of that legislation, and whether the definition of discrimination against women it contained included both direct and indirect discrimination. She asked if laws found to be unconstitutional could be struck down by the courts, and whether any cases involving discrimination against women had been brought before the courts. Lastly, it would be helpful if the delegation could throw some light on guarantees of the rights of the Muslim minority, including any available statistics on complaints of violations and related prosecutions.

24. **Ms. Šimonovič** welcomed the adoption by the Russian Federation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Its article 13 included an obligation to disseminate information on the protections provided therein, and she asked about its visibility in the Russian Federation.

25. She sought clarification on the provisions contained in the Constitution that addressed the subject of discrimination. In countries with a monistic legal system, the State party must adopt implementing

legislation and penalties at the national level in order to apply the Convention domestically, and she wondered what had been done to meet that requirement.

26. **Mr. Bruun** said that, given that the Russian Federation was a federal State with a complex structure and varying degrees of autonomy for its component republics, he would like to hear how the central Government guaranteed the application of the Convention in all the republics. He would welcome clarification on whether the Convention could be directly invoked in court and if so, whether there were concrete examples of cases. He would also be interested to hear about any education programmes for lawyers and judges regarding the content and application of the Convention. The fact that no complaints of gender discrimination had been brought to the Commission on Human Rights of the Russian Federation led him to wonder if such rights had enough visibility in the legal system.

27. **Ms. Ameline** said that the increase in violence and impunity in some of the Republics in situations of internal conflict was a major concern, and she wondered what legal means were available to provide for the rights of the victims of such violence. She requested a progress report on the planned reform of the judicial system to give more rights to the accused and more independence for judges.

28. The definition of discrimination in the Constitution must be explicit; otherwise some abuses would not be seen as discrimination. It was important to ensure that a legal basis existed for court action to remedy such abuses.

29. **Mr. Flinterman** said that the scope of article 2 of the Convention included such vulnerable groups as ethnic minorities and refugee women. He asked if there were any special procedures for women asylum-seekers and whether members of the Federal Migratory Service received any training in addressing gender-based violence. Lastly, he asked if sexual orientation was covered in legislation against discrimination.

30. **Ms. Neubauer** said that the information provided in the report did not clearly demonstrate that the Committee's recommendation regarding the national institutional mechanism for gender equality following the consideration of the previous report in 2002 had been implemented. An Inter-Departmental Commission for issues relating to guaranteeing the equality of men and women, formed in 2006, was mentioned in the

current report; she would like to know more about its position in the organizational structure of the Government, its leadership, staffing and financial resources, and whether any concrete information was available on the results of its work. She also asked the delegation to elaborate on the work of the Coordinating Council for gender problems. Lastly, she understood that there was no national gender equality action plan, but she would like to know if there were indicators of progress in implementation of the periodic action plans for equal rights and opportunity for men and women.

31. **Ms. Popescu** asked what entity was responsible for the coordination of the implementation of the Convention throughout the country. The new approach to planning and strategy since 2006 seemed to focus on women as mothers. Although she understood the demographic problems facing the country, she wondered how a gender perspective was ensured in all major programmes and strategies, particularly to combat poverty.

32. **Mr. Topilin** (Russian Federation), replying to the question concerning the rights of minorities, including Muslims, in the Russian Federation, said that the Constitution guaranteed the equality of human rights and civil liberties of all without regard to ethnic origin or religious belief. That equality was enforced by judicial decisions and administrative action. While there was no special commission with responsibility for the rights of minorities, the remit of the Ombudsman for Human Rights and the Ministry of Health and Social Development included ensuring equal treatment in the provision of services. Muslims in the Russian Federation lived mainly in the North Caucasus, and a special mechanism had recently been established for promoting economic and social development in that region, including programmes to address the negative economic impact of the counter-terrorist action in the Chechen Republic in the 1990s, the effects of which were still being felt.

33. Legislation in the Russian Federation upheld the freedoms of religion and belief, and no restrictions were placed on the provision of social services to individuals on the basis of religion or belief. Complaints by Russian Federation citizens to the European Court of Human Rights had related mainly to material rights, and the Russian Federation complied with the Court's rulings.

34. Progress was being made in publicizing the Convention and the Optional Protocol. Information about them was disseminated on the websites of State agencies and awareness-raising activities were undertaken with non-governmental organizations. Training was provided for social welfare and health-care personnel to familiarize them with the provisions of the Convention.

35. The equal rights and opportunities of every person in the Russian Federation irrespective of gender were guaranteed in the Constitution, whose provisions were fully in line with the requirements of the Convention. Any violation of those rights on the basis of gender was considered to be discrimination and was dealt with accordingly. In accordance with article 15 of the Constitution the principles of international law were an integral part of domestic law and obligations established in international agreements prevailed over domestic law. The Constitution guaranteed a range of anti-discrimination provisions.

36. Concerning the federal system and the enforcement of the Convention in the different regions of the country, he said that the laws of all the constituent entities must be in conformity with the national Constitution and the executive branch of the Russian Federation Government monitored the situation. A review of the legislation of all the constituent entities conducted in 2002-2003 on the order of the President of the Russian Federation had helped to ensure that laws in the various entities did not deviate from the norms of the Convention with regard to non-discrimination. Recently a special system of indicators covering such fields as health care, including maternal mortality, education and housing, had been introduced by Presidential Decree No. 825 of 2007 to monitor the efficiency of executive bodies in the constituent entities.

37. As an institution the office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights was generally well known in the country. The incumbent, a former member of the State Duma, was a well-respected human rights defender.

38. An extensive reform of the judicial system was under way with the aim of reinforcing the independence of the courts, improving procedures and bringing the system into line with international standards. A bill was under preparation to enhance the protection of citizens' rights, including provisions for free legal counselling services that would benefit

women. Greater attention should probably be paid in developing that legislation to the problem of violence against women.

39. There were very few women refugees and asylum-seekers in the Russian Federation, but many women migrated from the neighbouring countries of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine in search of work. Many were employed illegally. Estimates put the number of illegal workers in the Russian Federation at between 3 and 5 million. A new law had entered into force on 1 July 2010 to legalize the status of such migrants, making it possible for them to obtain a work permit for a modest fee. The Federal Migratory Service, which had responsibility for issues relating to migrant labour, was actively seeking through training courses and informational events to familiarize its personnel with the new legislation and with the applicable standards and rules for internally displaced persons and refugees.

40. As to sexual minorities such as lesbians, transgendered persons and bisexuals, discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation was not allowed and no distinctions were made in the laws as to gender or sexual orientation.

41. Within the context of a wide-ranging administrative reform in the Russian Federation, efforts were being made to find the best possible management structure for handling issues and to ensure effective interaction and coordination between government departments. A restructuring had been carried out with the aim of eliminating duplication and overlapping, and achieving greater efficiency. The authority and power of the ministries had been enhanced in the areas of policymaking and standard-setting, while most subsidiary bodies had been eliminated. The reform affected all issues dealt with at the federal level, not just gender equality alone. In terms of national machinery, the Ministry of Health and Social Development had all necessary authority to resolve issues in conjunction with other ministries if necessary. Women's issues had to be dealt with in a comprehensive manner in the different federal programmes, but it was sometimes difficult to isolate the gender perspective in specific programmes.

42. Any national plan of action on gender equality required constant effort and updating. A new project targeted to families and at-risk segments of the population was being prepared in order to implement

the recommendations of the Committee. It was to be hoped that the Russian Federation would be able to report on the results in near future.

43. As to the comment that there seemed to be too much emphasis on women as mothers, he said that the Government's objectives in the area of population were of great importance; the policies being pursued did not entail discrimination but rather were concerned with providing equal access to medical services and social welfare for those who had decided to have children. It was important to provide such individuals with a range of social and medical services, and much progress had been made in that area, including a reduction of maternal mortality.

44. **Ms. Ameline**, referring to article 4, noting that the draft law on State guarantees of equal rights and freedoms for men and women and equal opportunities for their realization had not been adopted and that reservations had been expressed about it, said that there appeared to be a lack of political will with regard to temporary special measures; she asked whether the Russian Federation intended to put the issue back on the legislative agenda.

45. **Ms. Šimonovič** said that notwithstanding the State party's contention that the draft law on that issue duplicated existing legislation, article 4, paragraph 1 of the Convention, which provided a legal foundation for the elaboration of temporary special measures in all countries with monistic legal systems, did not seem to have been taken into account at the legislative level. In 2002 the Committee had recommended that the State party should include a definition of discrimination in the Constitution; it was important that indirect discrimination should be covered. She asked whether any temporary special measures were envisaged in any other legislation.

46. **Ms. Awori**, referring to article 5, said that a study conducted in 2008 had suggested that the incidence of domestic violence was very high, affecting one in four families and accounting for up to 40 per cent of all violent crimes. It appeared that there was no specific legislation on domestic violence; it was not enough for offenders to be prosecuted under the Criminal Code. She asked what steps were being taken to enact a comprehensive federal law on domestic violence that would cover every woman in the Russian Federation.

47. **Ms. Coker-Appiah**, noting the statement in paragraph 30 of the report that the Russian Federation

remained a traditional society in which stereotypical representations of the social roles of men and women were still widespread, said that such attitudes reinforced the low status of women, led to acts of violence against them and influenced the way in which State agencies responded to them. She was concerned when highly placed Government officials made statements that placed the blame on the victims of gender-based violence, thereby giving legitimacy to discriminatory attitudes and creating an impression of impunity for the perpetrators. Although there were references in paragraphs 35 and 36 of the report to efforts to make law enforcement personnel more gender-sensitive, there was no evidence of any impact of the measures taken; a consistent approach should be adopted to the training of law enforcement personnel, and there should be regular impact assessments. The upsurge in traditional practices such as honour killing and bride abductions in parts of the Russian Federation gave cause for concern; she asked what steps were being taken to ensure that the laws of the Russian Federation and the Convention were strictly enforced in the communities where such practices occurred.

48. The Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences had drawn attention to the vulnerability of Chechen women to human rights violations arising from counter-terrorist strategies; the delegation had mentioned that there were no reported cases received by the law enforcement agencies but that could be because women feared further victimization and persecution. While States were entitled to take measures to protect their citizens from acts of terrorism, they also had an obligation to comply with acceptable standards; during situations of conflict there could be no derogation from the obligation of protection under the Convention. The State party must ensure that women were not exploited and that their rights were not violated.

49. **Ms. Patten**, recalling the concerns about domestic violence expressed by the Committee in its 2002 Concluding Observations, by the Human Rights Committee in 2009, and by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, expressed disappointment that the situation seemed not to have improved; she asked what the obstacles were to the adoption of specific legislation on domestic violence. The provisions of the Criminal Code offered only limited protection to victims of violence.

50. She was concerned that there were only 21 shelters in the entire country; no information had been provided about their capacity. She asked which body was responsible for collecting disaggregated data about violence against women.

51. In relation to two communications under the Optional Protocol, the Committee had spelled out the legal obligations of States parties under articles 1 and 2 of the Convention and stressed that domestic violence was not a private matter and that the State could be responsible for private acts if it failed to act with due diligence to prevent violations of rights or to investigate and punish acts of domestic violence.

52. **Ms. Hayashi** asked how many cases involving domestic violence had been taken up by the European Court of Human Rights. In two recent cases, in 2008 and 2010, the Court had found the Russian Federation responsible for the deaths of a 15-year-old girl and her cousin and of a 20-year-old Chechen woman; she asked whether the State party intended to prosecute the perpetrators, and whether the statute of limitations would be applicable to those crimes. She also asked what kind of measures, including human rights education, had been taken to combat impunity, in line with the Committee's recommendation in its 2002 Concluding Observations.

53. She asked whether, following the conclusion of the first review conference on the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Russian Federation had made any progress towards ratification of the Statute.

54. **Ms. Pimentel** requested information on the existence of legislation to prevent violence against women and combat gender stereotypes, and also on the role of the media in those areas. Since domestic violence was treated as a private matter in the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, complaints had to be filed by the victim, which could give rise to serious procedural difficulties; she asked what the Russian Federation intended to do to remedy the problem.

55. Referring to paragraph 11 of the report, she requested further information on the activities of the special office established within the Ministry of Justice, and asked whether women prisoners had the right to take care of their children while in prison.

56. **The Chairperson**, speaking in her personal capacity and referring to article 6, asked whether the State party intended to develop unified legislation to combat trafficking in persons; it was very important to have a national plan of action covering prevention, protection and punishment, particularly in a vast country in which there were major problems of trafficking. Clearly, more shelters were needed, particularly for women returning from abroad who needed to be reintegrated into society and trained in work skills. The training of police officers and law enforcement personnel in order to assist victims of trafficking was also important. The State party needed to study the root causes of trafficking.

57. **Ms. Chutikul**, noting that paragraph 44 of the report referred to a programme of cooperation among CIS States in the area of human trafficking for 2007-2010, requested information about the measures covered, the main results achieved so far, and what was envisaged after 2010.

58. She asked what was being done to disseminate information about recruiting agencies and their methods, especially to high-risk groups and to law enforcement personnel, and what results were being achieved; whether anti-money-laundering legislation was used in prosecuting traffickers who belonged to organized crime rings; and whether the specialized police units which dealt with trafficking were aware of ILO Convention No. 182 and the recommendations of other treaty bodies in relation to the exploitation of street children, especially girls, by traffickers. Very little information had been provided about legislation to combat prostitution, although she had been informed that there were about 700,000 prostitutes in and around Moscow alone; she asked what was being done about that problem and whether it was true that prostitutes did not have access to health care, including check-ups for HIV/AIDS, and were sometimes abused by the police. She also asked what steps the State party was taking to work with countries to which Russian women had been trafficked and what kind of assistance was given to the victims as a component of reintegration programmes.

59. **Mr. Topilin** (Russian Federation) said that the legislation of the Russian Federation was fully compatible with the Convention. Nonetheless, special temporary measures were under consideration, and in a number of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation such measures were in place with regard to job quotas for women. Similar measures existed

already in Russian employment law. A bill on funding job training programmes for women returning to the job market following maternity leave or after staying home to care for disabled children was currently being drawn up in Parliament. A similar amendment to the law on employment was also being prepared.

60. Temporary measures would most probably be put in place through amendments to existing laws rather than through the adoption of a new law, as duplication of norms was not acceptable in Russian legislative practice.

61. The comprehensive references in existing law to the types of crimes which might be committed against women in the context of domestic violence were considered sufficient and exhaustive. It was true that, for a variety of reasons, including a woman's reluctance to file a case or the fact that law enforcement agencies sometimes did not receive such cases, they were sometimes not prosecuted. However, that was matter of implementation and the care with which the police or employees of social service agencies carried out their duties.

62. Statistics on domestic violence were lacking in the Russian Federation, and there were plans to remedy that. Attempts were also being made to train social service workers to recognize signs of abuse. In cases where a victim had not filed a criminal complaint, preventive actions were taken and help was provided. Such work was very sensitive, as it was necessary, in the exercise of authority, to avoid interference in people's private lives. Preventive work was extremely important in cases of latent or unreported violence.

63. A separate law on domestic violence was not being prepared. The approach was rather to make incremental changes to existing law where needed. Such changes had been introduced, and, in recent years, the terms of imprisonment for human trafficking and other crimes had been increased.

64. In all parts of Russia and among all ethnic groups, women and mothers were held sacred above all else. The attitude that women were of lower status simply did not exist in the Russian Federation, nor could it, as it was incompatible with national tradition. It was true that crimes were committed against women, and efforts were being made to combat that. In the Russian Federation, there were no traditions leading naturally to the violation of women's rights. That had never been the case, it was not currently the case and it could not be the case.

65. As was the general rule in all countries, all cases brought and handled by the investigative agencies were, wherever possible, carried through to completion.

66. Joint measures taken at the level of the Commonwealth of Independent States to track supply channels for trafficking victims were mainly operational in nature.

67. Given that Moscow had a population of 10 million, there could not possibly be 700,000 prostitutes there. An indication of the source of Mr. Chutikul's information would be appreciated.

68. There was no discrimination based on occupation in access to medical care. All citizens of the Russian Federation had medical coverage. Services for people who were HIV-positive had been expanding in recent years. There were special centres where people engaged in prostitution could receive HIV tests. All citizens, even those involved in such an activity as prostitution, had access to the full range of medical services, tests and medications.

69. **Mr. Vereikin** (Russian Federation) said that measures to address domestic violence in the Russian Federation were governed by the Criminal Code, and that experience had clearly shown those efforts to be effective. The Criminal Code covered such crimes as battery, torture, rape, violent sexual actions and compulsion to perform sexual acts. Under Russian law, violent acts against women were crimes regardless of the identity of the perpetrator. In order for a case to be brought, the victim must file a complaint.

70. According to official data, there were few cases of sexual and domestic violence. In Russian law there were a number of provisions in which women were treated as a separate category of victim. In certain cases, if the crime victim was visibly pregnant or known to the perpetrator to be pregnant, that was an aggravating circumstance. There were penalties for discrimination in hiring and for unwarranted termination of employment of a pregnant woman or a woman with young children. The law placed restrictions on the use of force by police against visibly pregnant women and against women generally.

71. Since 2007, rates of domestic violence and rape had dropped consistently each year. Rape had one of the highest detection and conviction rates of all crimes. In 2005, a Presidential decision had made crime prevention a priority, with social and medical services

and religious organizations, as well as investigative and court offices, drawn into a nationwide effort to address the issue. At the federal level, crime prevention and juvenile rights commissions had recently been established, both of them headed by the Minister of Internal Affairs. All meetings of those commissions were broadcast on television and covered in the press, ensuring broad public awareness of activity by the Government on the question of domestic violence.

72. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, along with other relevant government bodies, including the Ministry of Justice, was preparing a federal crime prevention law, which also covered domestic violence. It was now undergoing a first reading in the relevant specialized committee in the lower chamber of the State Duma. Thus, the issue was being addressed legislatively and at the practical level, with positive results already apparent.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.