



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

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

Summary record of the 788th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 25 May 2007, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Šimonović

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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

Initial report of Mauritania (CEDAW/C/MRT/1) (*continued*)

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

Articles 7 and 8

2. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) thanked Committee members for their questions. She pointed to the strong presence of women in the mass media in her country, which aspired to see a minimum of 20 per cent female representation in all administrative fields, including diplomacy. With regard to the funding of political parties that gave seats to women, each party had a policy on women, copies of which were available.

3. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) noted that women were well represented throughout the media in a variety of roles, including technical. Women were also represented in foreign affairs and held high-ranking positions as heads of diplomatic missions, consuls and even ambassadors.

4. In political life, women held important ministerial posts and were elected to parliament. It was planned to establish a network of women in Government and parliamentarians, which would form part of the machinery to monitor the status of women and be composed of people motivated by the desire to improve the situation of women. Women ran some political parties or held high office within them: one woman had run for president. It was important to encourage the participation of women at high levels in political life.

5. His country was ready to learn from other countries and kept abreast of developments in other North and West African and sub-Saharan countries, with which it shared a common history and civilization, in order to coordinate programmes and objectives. The objectives of his country were in line with those of the Convention.

Article 9

6. **Ms. Gabr** asked about the nationality of children of Mauritanian women married to foreigners.

7. **Mr. Ould Baidy** (Mauritania) said that under the Mauritanian Nationality Code the nationality of a child of a Mauritanian mother and foreign father had to be decided one year before the child reached majority. The situation was complex, however, and different modalities applied in different cases. The children of a second wife could obtain Mauritanian nationality five years after her marriage to a Mauritanian man, whereas naturalization was required in other cases. If the parents were not known, the child automatically received Mauritanian nationality. He was not able to provide the text of the Code.

8. **The Chairperson** noted that it would be useful to have the text of the Code, in order to assess the extent to which it was compatible with article 9 of the Convention.

Article 10

9. **Ms. Simms** recognized that efforts to educate girls appeared to be bearing fruit and asked about measures taken to ensure that ethnic minorities, in particular former slaves, had access to education.

10. **Ms. Zou Xiaoqiao** noted the efforts and achievements of Mauritania with regard to education for girls but also pointed to the absence from the report of some crucial information, in particular on literacy, enrolment, rural/urban drop-out or gender-disaggregated attendance rates in secondary and higher education, in addition to information on teachers. Such data were important to consideration of the report and to policy formulation.

11. In view of the enrolment and drop-out rates for girls in rural areas, she asked about special measures to ensure the access of girls to education. She requested information on specific efforts or measures to eradicate illiteracy, in particular in rural areas, and the number of women who had benefited from the campaign against illiteracy (2004-2006).

12. **Mr. Flinterman** commended Mauritania on its progress and achievements in the field of education and, in particular, on the 2001 Compulsory Primary Education Act. He sought further information on the social, economic and cultural factors impeding the access of women to education and special measures

taken in that regard, including intended beneficiaries, obstacles encountered and impact to date. It would also be useful to have information on concrete measures to enforce the provisions of the Act and on the involvement of women in higher education, in terms of the percentage of female lecturers and professors and the fields of study chosen. He asked whether the National Scholarship Commission gave special assistance to women to gain access to higher education.

13. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that equal treatment was a reality in Mauritania and discrimination did not exist in any form, including ethnic. Her country was proud that its Minister of Education was a woman, so that education policy would take the problems of women into consideration. Moreover, the education of rural women was a focus of concern and efforts were under way to improve levels of education for boys and girls. The President was anxious to achieve educational reform and develop education in a sustainable manner.

14. **Mr. Ould Baidy** (Mauritania) cited recent figures on gender in education and pointed out that female enrolment was one or two percentage points below that for boys over the past six years. In 2004, the school dropout rate had improved by 7 per cent, meaning that 66 per cent of pupils stayed in school. A range of programmes had been established including a national 10-year programme to ensure full school attendance and good education for boys and girls. There was also a school lunch programme and a programme to educate adolescents. Socio-economic and cultural factors that interfered with the attendance of girls were family poverty, distance from school, domestic responsibilities, early marriage and pregnancy. Thirty per cent of primary and 11 per cent of secondary teachers were women.

15. **Ms. Mint Mohamed Mahmoud** (Mauritania) emphasized a number of initiatives taken by the Ministry of Education with other partners to improve access by girls to schools. Studies showed that distance from school, domestic or farming duties and family poverty prevented some girls from attending school. The Ministry of Women's Affairs had therefore put a number of measures in place. In conjunction with the United Nations, school buses had been provided in three remote regions, such that 14 regions currently provided bus transport for girls from villages to schools. As a result, some girls had managed to reach secondary school level. Subsidized school supplies

were also provided to girls in those same regions. The Ministry of Education had established a fellowships project to help girls continue with their studies. Enrolment of women in higher education remained low, at some 13 per cent, and so a range of ideas and initiatives had been introduced such as the creation of prizes for women, in particular in science and mathematics. Beyond the context of the law, a quota for grants and fellowships to women had been introduced and a number of women had already benefited.

16. The campaign against illiteracy was of paramount importance. Illiteracy primarily affected women and could obstruct their knowledge of their rights. The State had taken a number of initiatives with a number of partners, the most recent being the African Development Bank initiative which had ensured that 1,000 women could read and write in five prefectures. At the local level, there was reliance on civil society organizations such as NGOs specialized in education, working under Government auspices in remote regions and rural areas to combat female illiteracy. The Ministry was trying to extend that pilot project to other regions of the country.

17. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) stressed that education was the key to sustainable development. Although it was sometimes difficult to provide adequate educational services at the local level, local governors and prefects had been empowered to introduce positive discrimination policies with a view to ensuring that children from certain social and ethnic groups were able to attend school. In rural areas, a number of measures had been taken to increase enrolment rates, particularly among girls. At present, boys up to the age of 12 and girls up to the age of 16 could enrol in primary school. Rural parents' associations were also working to ensure that more girls had access to educational services, and efforts were under way to mobilize widespread support for literacy programmes.

Article 11

18. **Ms. Patten**, after having commended the State party for its efforts to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment, expressed concern about ongoing inequalities: Only 12.4 per cent of women had access to salaried positions, it was more difficult for married women to find employment and, on average, women earned 60 per cent less than men.

She asked whether the Government intended to incorporate a gender perspective into its labour legislation and, in particular, whether it planned to enact a new law on equal pay for work of equal value or to codify procedures to address that issue. Referring to paragraph 193 of the State party's report (CEDAW/C/MRT/1), she enquired whether the method for calculating, *inter alia*, base pay for civil servants and public officials was applied in the private sector. What was the role and composition of the Classification Commission mentioned in paragraph 196 of the report?

19. It would be useful to know whether any mechanism existed to ensure that job performance evaluations were conducted on the basis of gender-neutral criteria. Had the Government taken any steps, including the implementation of temporary special measures in the educational and/or employment sectors, to overcome gender-based occupational segregation by encouraging women to apply for non-traditional and skilled jobs? Lastly, she wished to know whether the State party had envisaged the adoption of legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace.

20. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that the State party had not provided sufficiently detailed gender-disaggregated statistics on women's participation in the labour market. Experience had shown that legislating for equality was not enough: specific anti-discrimination policies were needed, as well as effective enforcement mechanisms. She would be interested to know whether the Government had taken any steps to that end.

21. She expressed concern about the lack of vocational training for women, and enquired whether any relevant programmes had been introduced. She also wondered why some sectors and professions were less open to women than to men. Referring to the specific needs of working mothers, she asked whether any legislation had been enacted to prevent the dismissal of women who returned to work after maternity leave.

22. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that, since Mauritanian women and men were equal before the law in all spheres, the country's employment legislation did not discriminate on the basis of gender. Indeed, a number of positive discrimination policies had been

implemented with a view to favouring women's participation in the labour market.

23. **Mr. Ould Baidy** (Mauritania) pointed out that Mauritania had ratified all the relevant International Labour Organization Conventions providing for the equal treatment of women and men in the field of employment. The Labour Code did not discriminate against women, and, under article 57 of the Personal Status Code, women were permitted to work outside the home in a profession of their choice. Women whose husbands denied them that right were entitled to bring complaints before the courts.

24. In response to the questions put by Ms. Halperin-Kaddari, he said that the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and the Family had established two vocational training facilities for women (one in Nouakchott and one in the interior of the country), as well as a separate teacher training centre. There were 100 women currently enlisted in the armed forces, some of whom held the rank of officer, and women accounted for 50 per cent of the gendarmerie and 5 per cent of the police force.

25. **Ms. Mint Mohamed Mahmoud** (Mauritania) said that vocational training centres had also been established in regional and provincial capitals. Trade unions were actively involved in efforts to ensure respect for women's employment rights, and many women were members of such unions. The Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and the Family was responsible for dealing with complaints concerning violations of women's employment rights and for representing women in the relevant legal proceedings.

26. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) said that, since 60 to 70 per cent of female school leavers obtained the series D (scientific) baccalaureate, the majority of students enrolled in university-level scientific and technical courses were women. Consequently, increasing numbers of women were taking jobs in the petrochemical industry, information technology and civil engineering.

27. While there was a discernible wage gap between women and men in the private sector, public sector employees received equal pay for equal work, regardless of gender.

Article 12

28. **Ms. Zou Xiaojiao** commended the State party for the introduction of the National Reproductive Health Programme, and enquired as to the specific measures taken to ensure that the services provided were accessible to rural and poor women. Since the Programme was due to expire in 2007, it would be useful to know whether the Government had evaluated the results obtained. How many women had benefited from it?

29. The report was silent on the issue of abortion. She wished to know whether abortion was prohibited in Mauritania and whether any measures were in place to reduce the number of unsafe abortions.

30. **Ms. Pimentel** expressed concern about the findings of the demographic and health survey that had been conducted in Mauritania in 2000. She would therefore be grateful to know whether the National Reproductive Health Programme had in fact been implemented. If so, the State party should provide further information on the results achieved. She was also concerned about the assertion that the HIV/AIDS rate was higher among the female population because it was difficult for women to insist on safe sex. In that connection, she wondered why the new strategic framework for the prevention of HIV/AIDS for the period 2003-2007 emphasized vertical, rather than horizontal, transmission of the disease. Lastly, it would be useful to have more information about health-care services for older and disabled women.

31. **Ms. Arocha Domínguez** said that, given Mauritania's difficult socio-economic situation, its efforts to eliminate discrimination against women were commendable. However, she stressed the need for more detailed information about the results of the National Reproductive Health Programme.

32. The fertility rate in Mauritania was exceptionally high (6.15 children per woman) and contraceptive use was low. She therefore enquired as to the measures taken to reduce that rate by, inter alia, promoting birth spacing techniques. Had any efforts been made to involve men in such initiatives? With regard to HIV/AIDS, the State party should indicate the steps taken to increase women's access to information on protective measures and provide details of any prevention programmes specifically geared to women.

33. **Ms. Dairiam**, noting the high rate of early pregnancy, the increase in the number of HIV/AIDS cases and the high level of substance abuse among young persons, asked how the Government was addressing adolescent health issues. She would like to know whether there were any assessments of the health needs of various categories of young persons. Information was needed on young persons who faced discrimination in their access to health services because of their social status, despite laws guaranteeing equality. Details were also needed on any training provided to health workers to enable them to offer youth-friendly services, including counselling. It was not clear whether health service providers were monitored to prevent discriminatory practices. It would be useful to know whether there were records of complaints lodged by young persons against service providers.

34. **Ms. Mint Boida** (Mauritania) said that, under the national health policy, efforts had been made to provide for birth spacing and prenatal care. Among the initiatives taken were the reproductive health programme and a strategy to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality. The initiatives were complemented by advocacy and social mobilization efforts, including yearly events sponsored by the First Lady of Mauritania to improve the health of women. Her Government was pursuing a strategy to train gynaecologists, midwives and birth attendants. It also sought to provide safe motherhood equipment and basic surgical care. The Government had also put in place other programmes to increase women's access to low-cost care, including treatment for obstetric fistula, family planning services and free contraceptives. The health policy for 2006 to 2012 set several priorities, including combating maternal and neonatal mortality and malaria, the Expanded Programme on Immunization and others. A pilot project establishing a set fee for obstetrical care had been extended to several parts of the country, which greatly reduced costs for prenatal care, delivery and post-natal care and would cover more regions in 2007. Her Government sought to extend the fee to almost 90 per cent of pregnant women. Seroprevalence for pregnant women was 0.52 per cent.

35. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) said that there was a national committee to combat HIV/AIDS directly under the Prime Minister's authority, which had given impetus to efforts to stop the spread of the disease.

Like women, young persons currently had an independent ministry which defended their interests. There were no grounds to assert the existence of discrimination against young persons on any basis whatsoever. Young persons of various ethnic backgrounds had been active in recent public activities and had expressed their political interests in their respective national languages. In addition, young persons had a radio station which broadcast in all the country's national languages. The young persons working there engaged in a live dialogue with the entire population through phone-in shows, and a range of issues was freely discussed. There were no complaints of ethnic discrimination lodged by young persons with the courts, as there was no such discrimination. Although young persons were involved in political decision-making and formulating youth policies, there was need for better infrastructure, including social clubs, sports organizations and other youth outlets.

36. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that her Government had been active in combating HIV/AIDS since the 1980s. There were HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and outreach centres. Furthermore, a law on controlling and combating HIV/AIDS was currently being approved.

Article 13

37. **Ms. Coker-Appiah**, commending the Government on the many microcredit programmes for women which it had introduced, said that microcredit did not always lead to a qualitative improvement in the lives of women. Often, once women were engaged in some income-generating activity or had access to microcredit, the men in their lives no longer took responsibility for supporting the family, and the women found themselves in a more difficult situation. She would like to know whether there had been any assessment of the impact of microcredit support extended to women during the previous decade. Microcredit did not move women from one social and economic level to the next, as the sums involved were usually too small. She would welcome any initiatives to provide women with larger loans so that they might build intermediate-level businesses. Information was also needed on any programmes to incorporate women working in the informal sector into any national social security or health insurance programme.

38. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that her Government was currently discussing measures to remove women from poverty and boost their economic status. Women in Mauritania, however, had proven capacities in the trade sector. They were a large presence at markets. The main problem was that poor rural women had no access to the means of production to generate income. Microcredit was designed to give them the means to gain such access, improve their economic performance and thus enhance their standard of living.

39. **Ms. Mint Mohamed Mahmoud** (Mauritania) said that there were various levels of poverty. Women living in extreme poverty benefited greatly from microcredit, as had been shown by studies conducted by her Government. Recent studies had shown that microcredit extended by the Nissa Banks to the country's most disadvantaged women, for example, had contributed to alleviating poverty. The microcredit particularly benefited the many women who were divorced and often the sole supporters of their families.

40. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) said that his Government considered microfinance to be an important means for development and job creation. It was closely monitoring the results of microcredit in India. Larger loans were also available to women. He cited by way of example a loan given by a Syrian organization which had gone towards the construction of housing for women.

Article 14

41. **Ms. Patten** requested information on the policies and programmes envisaged by the Government to increase rural women's access to financial, technical and marketing services. It would be useful to know about its efforts to provide appropriate infrastructure and technology and strengthen rural women's microenterprises to facilitate the transition from the informal sector to the formal sector. She asked about the technical assistance, training and outreach activities currently provided to rural women and whether there were networking arrangements for entrepreneurial women. It was unclear how the Government informed rural women about economic opportunities, credit and market technology access.

42. **Ms. Tan**, noting with appreciation that many initiatives had been undertaken to improve the lives of rural women, would like to know whether there were

any statistics on the number of persons or percentage of the rural population which currently had access to electricity and clean drinking water. Information was needed on the number of roads constructed and on the regions which were still remote and difficult to access. It would also be useful to have details on the number of health posts in each area, with the ratio of health posts to women in the population. Data were also needed on maternal and infant mortality rates in the rural areas. She wondered what accounted for the high primary school dropout rate among girls mentioned in the responses to the list of issues. It was unclear whether it was due to early marriage, or a preference for educating sons instead of daughters, or the need for girls to start work at an early age. She would like to know what was being done to change mindsets and promote girls' education in rural areas. She would also welcome data on the percentage of women who were currently able to make a living from traditional handicrafts. Information was needed on any efforts being made to standardize credit systems throughout the regions of the country and to streamline the process for women.

43. **Ms. Coker-Appiah** wondered whether rural women were able to participate in the elaboration of development projects in Mauritania. As the main source of employment in rural areas was agriculture, she wished to know whether women had access to land and could possess land in their own name.

44. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that, although her Government did not have a specific policy on rural women, the current discussion would pave the way for such a policy in the near future. She would provide a detailed table covering all available health indicators broken down by States, provinces and regions.

45. **Mr. Ould Baidy** (Mauritania) said, with respect to the coverage of national programmes at the local level, that his Government was engaged in a process of decentralization. Alongside the national strategic framework for poverty reduction were regional strategic frameworks, which mostly addressed rural areas. There was no area in the country which lacked a government office, school or clinic. Although his Government had a national strategy for the advancement of women, it was also developing and implementing a strategy which specifically addressed the educational, health, economic and other needs of rural women at the regional and local levels.

46. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) said that, while available macroeconomic and demographic data provided an overall picture, the ministry responsible for women's affairs needed to develop a specialized database that would enable it to generate statistics on the employment and the socio-economic status of women at both the local and regional levels. Such statistics would enable the ministry to pursue a decentralized approach to social mobilization and to improving the economic status of women.

47. **Ms. Mint Mohamed Mahmoud** (Mauritania) said that numerous initiatives targeting poor and rural women, ranging from women's banks to literacy programmes and electoral awareness campaigns, had achieved a measure of success. In fact, a woman had been elected mayor of a remote rural village and there were rural women members of parliament. While there were no precise statistics as to the extent that rural women had benefited from such programmes and initiatives, it could not be denied that women had indeed benefited from them.

Articles 15 and 16

48. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that the report did not contain sufficient information on the laws regulating divorce, women's economic rights upon divorce, alimony, child support, legal rights to marital property and inheritance rights. The report contained alarming information regarding women's age at marriage. While the Personal Status Code stipulated that the legal capacity to enter into marriage was granted to all persons of competence who had reached the age of 18, there was information which indicated that 28 per cent of girls aged 15 to 19 were married, with 13 per cent having been married before the age of 15. She wondered whether the Government had any data on age at marriage and whether the law had been enforced. She believed that polygamy was in fact permitted. Although the report indicated that a woman could request that her husband not marry another woman, a man was still permitted to take another wife if he could guarantee equality between the wives. She wondered whether the Government was going to amend that law, which clearly contravened the Convention.

49. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** said that Mauritanian family law was one of the best laws that the Committee had studied from countries with the same cultural background. That law gave women many rights with

respect to the terms of the marriage contract and marital living conditions. She proposed that Mauritania should draft a model marriage contract which included clauses specifying the rights guaranteed to women by family law in order to ensure that they retained their full legal rights upon marriage.

50. **Ms. Tan** said that Mauritanian law still allowed men a level of control over their wives' property and wondered whether the Government had contemplated amending the law so as to give married women full control over their personal property. With respect to the article in Mauritanian law which allowed a woman to stipulate that her husband should not take another wife, she noted that another provision allowed the husband to take another wife if the necessary conditions had been met. She wondered what the consequences were for a man who took another wife against his first wife's wishes.

51. With respect to the "Tewkil" mandate, she wanted to know what were the procedures that were followed after a husband had given such a mandate to his wife; what was the difference between a single, double and triple repudiation; when the mandate conferred a right upon the wife; and what were the implications of the wife having that right. Finally, Mauritanian law gave preference to the mother when awarding custody of children. That law was biased and made stereotypical assumptions about women, regardless of ability and situation. She wondered whether there were any plans to amend the law so that custody would be awarded on the basis of objective standards.

52. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that the Civil Status Code allowed both men and women to dispose of their property as they saw fit, so long as the amount being disposed of was not greater than one third of all property that a person possessed; both women and men had the right to file a complaint in court when their spouse wanted to dispose of property exceeding that limit.

53. **Mr. Ould Baidy** (Mauritania) said that, while the Civil Status Code set the marriage age at 18, a guardian was able to arrange a marriage for a girl younger than 18 if such a marriage was in her interest; a guardian found to have arranged a marriage for a girl younger than 18 for his personal interests was liable to punishment under the law.

54. The Code was also clear on the question of polygamy. A man was allowed to take another wife

provided that both the first wife and the prospective second wife consented to a polygamous marriage and provided that the husband treated both wives equally. The difficulties inherent in fulfilling the latter condition effectively served as an indirect ban on polygamy.

55. With regard to marriage contracts, there were legal and social requirements that had to be met in order for those contracts to be valid. Furthermore, wives had the right to include conditions in the marriage contract that had been agreed upon by the couple.

56. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that Mauritanian law gave men and women the same rights with respect to property ownership and there were many women, both rural and urban, who owned substantial property. However, there were a very limited number of remote areas which maintained traditions that gave men preference in land ownership.

Follow-up questions

57. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling** acknowledged that the conditions faced by the Government of Mauritania made it difficult to implement all aspects of the Convention. Nonetheless, in its next report the Government should provide information on its health and education policies for disabled girls, vocational opportunities available to disabled women and the health and economic status of elderly women.

58. **Ms. Pimentel** said that, although the report mentioned force-feeding and classified it as a form of violence, a member of the Mauritanian delegation had said that force-feeding was no longer practised. She wondered whether the delegation could explain that contradiction. With respect to HIV/AIDS, she wondered why the emphasis of Mauritanian efforts had been on women and mother-to-child transmission and not on sexual relationships.

59. **Ms. Belmihoub-Zerdani** said that, in view of the widespread poverty in Mauritania, the Government should insist that wealthy countries honour the commitment made in Beijing in 1995 to devote 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to aid. She emphasized that work must continue to end the practices of early marriage and female genital mutilation.

60. **The Chairperson**, speaking as an member of the Committee, recalled that the Mauritanian delegation had said that women could include a stipulation in the marriage contract ensuring their right to work and wondered whether men were also allowed to include such a stipulation in the marriage contract. She also wanted to know what happened should the man not agree to allow the woman to include a right to work stipulation.

61. **Ms. Mint Khattri** (Mauritania) said that women were free to add any stipulations to the marriage contract; men were free to accept those stipulations and enter into the contract or to reject them, in which case there would be no marriage. Mauritanian culture previously had condoned force-feeding because corpulence had been considered a sign of beauty in a woman but, thanks to the efforts of civil society and the State, that was no longer true. Force-feeding was now considered a form of violence against women and was no longer practised.

62. Concluding her remarks, she expressed gratitude to the experts for their opinions and recommendations and the hope that they would continue to support her country's efforts to achieve greater freedom and happiness for women in Mauritania and around the world. The Committee's support would enable Mauritania to embark on a course of fundamental change reflecting all the recommendations it had made.

63. **Mr. Ould Tolba** (Mauritania) said there was a school to educate and train disabled girls and there were special institutions designed to meet the needs of mute, deaf or blind persons. Ordinary schools had also made special arrangements to accommodate the needs of disabled students. For example, a blind student was allowed to have someone accompany him into the examination hall in order to read out questions and to write out his answers.

64. In conclusion, he thanked the Committee members for their valuable recommendations, which would enhance the performance of the specialized agencies in Mauritania. Minister Mint Khattri would attend the upcoming meeting of the Organization of Arab Women and would convey those recommendations and her experiences from the current meeting to the organization.

65. **The Chairperson** thanked the experts for their questions and comments and thanked the Government of Mauritania for its responses and explanations as

well as for its efforts to implement fully the provisions of the Convention. The Committee would provide recommendations along with clear guidance on future implementation of the Convention.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.